SAFE HOME FROM THE BLAZING HELL THAT WAS DUNKIRK

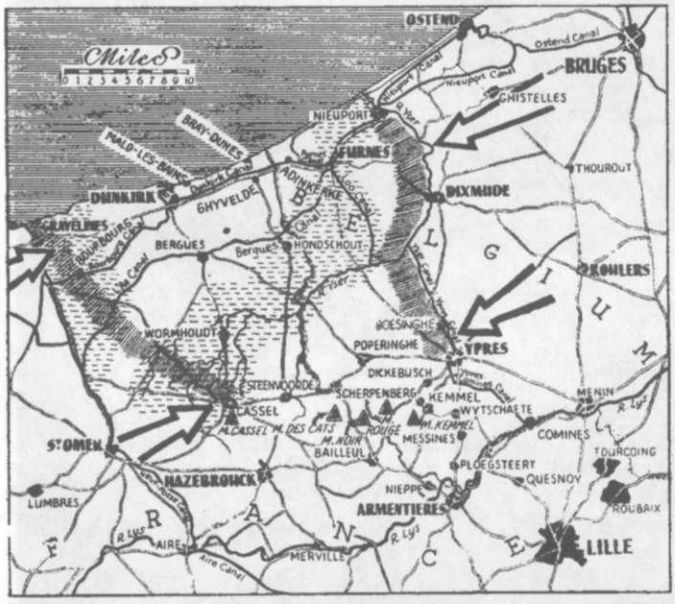
On Saturday, June 1, 1940, some details of the magnificent achievement of the British Expeditionary Force in fighting its way back to the coast became known, and the next day Mr. Eden was able to announce that four-fifths of the men had been got safely away. Here is the scene at a South-East Coast port when destroyers were arriving from Dunkirk packed with soldiers. In such quick succession did the vessels arrive that they were sometimes two deep alongside the quays.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

Twenty Days of Fighting All The Way

"There is no braver epic in all our annals," said Mr. Anthony Eden in his broadcast of June 2, when describing the B.E.F.'s march into Belgium and its fighting withdrawal to Dunkirk. Below we retrace the footsteps of the gallant divisions.

IT was on Friday, May 10, 1940, that the British Expeditionary Force crossed the frontier from France into Belgium at the urgent call of the King of the Belgians, whose army was already in difficulties as a result of the failure to blow up the vital bridge over the Meuse at Maastricht. By Tuesday, May 14, the British had taken up their positions in front of Brussels, on the river Dyle from Louvain to Wavre; on their left flank was the bulk of the Belgian Army, and south of them the French occupied a line from Wavre to Namur and thence through the Ardennes to the beginning of the Maginot Line proper at Montmédy. The early collapse of the Belgian advanced defences and the simultaneous piercing of the French position between Wavre and Sedan in the Upper Meuse made the withdrawal of the B.E.F. inevitable.



This map of Flanders shows the approximate lines (shaded areas) of the Allied forces covering the retreat towards the coast on May 29-30, 1940. The broken lines indicate floodable areas, and within them is the approximate position held on June 1.

With their right flank almost in the air, for by now the French forces in the Ardennes were in rapid retreat, the B.E.F. fell back, giving blow for blow every inch of the way—first to the Senne, then to the Dendre, until it managed to establish itself on a line chosen by the Allied High Command on the river Scheldt from Audenarde to Maulde on the Franco-Belgian frontier. "Seventy-five miles forward, a fight at the end of the advance, and seventy-five miles back, fighting all the way; all in the space of ten days." That, said Mr. Anthony Eden, was the first phase of the battle of the ports, and it was brilliantly executed. There was one division which did not lose a single straggler on that 150 miles' march: and one who saw our troops under fire said that no display of drill at Olympia could be smarter than the work of the men of our forces.

So on May 20 the B.E.F. found itself back on the Scheldt with its strength in men and material almost intact. On the new line fierce fighting took place, and some little ground was gained and lost. But meanwhile the German mechanized columns were pouring through the gap to the south, cutting the Allies' lines of communication and biting ever deeper into their back areas. The gap between the British and French armies began to yawn in the neighbourhood of Arras, where until a few weeks before had been Lord Gort's headquarters. Two British divisions and an armoured brigade were detached from the main force and sent south to Arras, where they delivered a counter-attack which, though only partially successful, inflicted tremendous losses on the German Army. In the end the little force was almost surrounded and only just managed to fight its way out.

Now the Germans advanced in overwhelming force on Amiens and Abbeville, and threatened to cut off the B.E.F. from the Channel ports. After a heroic resistance Boulogne was stormed by the enemy, and Calais, too, was captured, although in the Citadel a small British force with orders to fight to the last continued to hold out. Once again the retreat was sounded and once again magnificent leadership, splendid staff work, indomitable bravery, and the most gallant endurance marked its execution.

The difficulties of the withdrawal were immensely heightened by the masses of civilians who were engulfed in the flood of war.

"The whole area," said a senior serving officer in a broadcast on May 29, "was literally swarming with hapless refugees. I had four years of it in the last war, but I shall ever be haunted by the heartrending sight of a whole people flying in terror with what little they could pack on to their vans, carts, bikes, and perambulators. Old and young, pale and sick, plodding along and stumbling their way from village to village with fear, despair, and horror writ on every face. The successful extrication of our long mechanized columns, often under intense air attack, and the dogged delaying actions fought by our rearguards were alike remarkable feats."

Slowly the khaki line moved back while on its flanks motorized and armoured car detachments supported by batteries of field artillery kept the would-be encirclers at bay and defeated every attempt at penetration of our front. By the morning of May 27 the Franco-British Army occupied a little loop of territory centring about Lille; its left flank was in touch with the Belgians near Menin, in front of Ypres, whence the line swung south to Maulde, then west to Douai and north-west to Cassel, past Lens, Béthune and St. Omer—what memories of the last war to end war these names recall!—all of which were in enemy hands.

Filling the Gap Made by Treachery

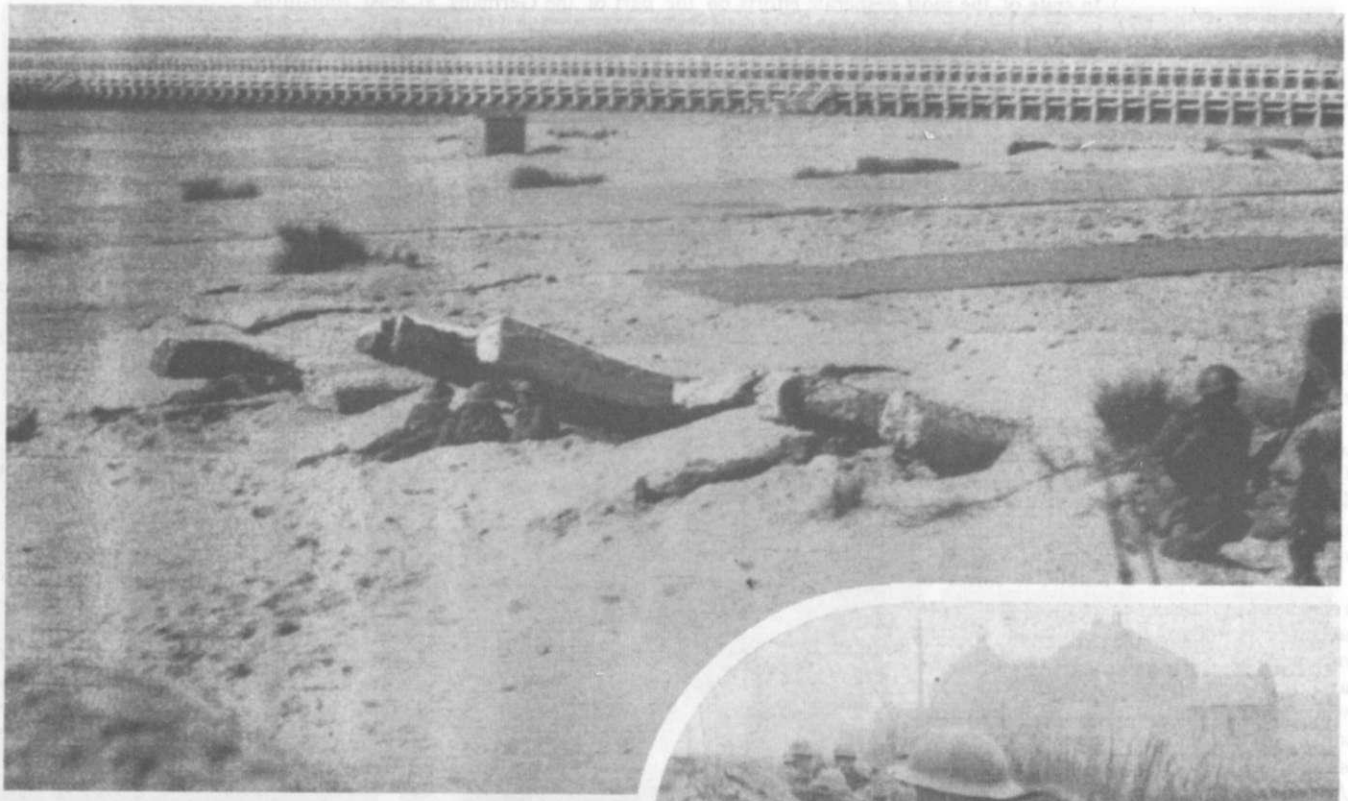
The next day, May 28, was the day of King Leopold's surrender, and the position of the Allies, already dangerous, was rendered desperate in the extreme. As German motorized columns swept towards the Allies' now unguarded northern flank only one line of action was left to Gort and his men—retreat on Dunkirk; and in that retreat the B.E.F., fighting for its life, covered itself with immortal glory. Swiftly divisions were moved to fill the gap left open by the Belgian collapse—some troops marched 35 miles in twenty-four hours—and despite the enormously extended frontage the British line stood firm. At one time, as Mr. Eden revealed later, the British Expeditionary Force of nine divisions was holding a front of 80 miles.

"They held on and fought back. On the west British troops defended the narrowing gap to the sea. Day after day the battle continued. At the end of it they had fought themselves to a standstill, but they had held their ground and by doing so they enabled the remainder of the Expeditionary Force to get clear."

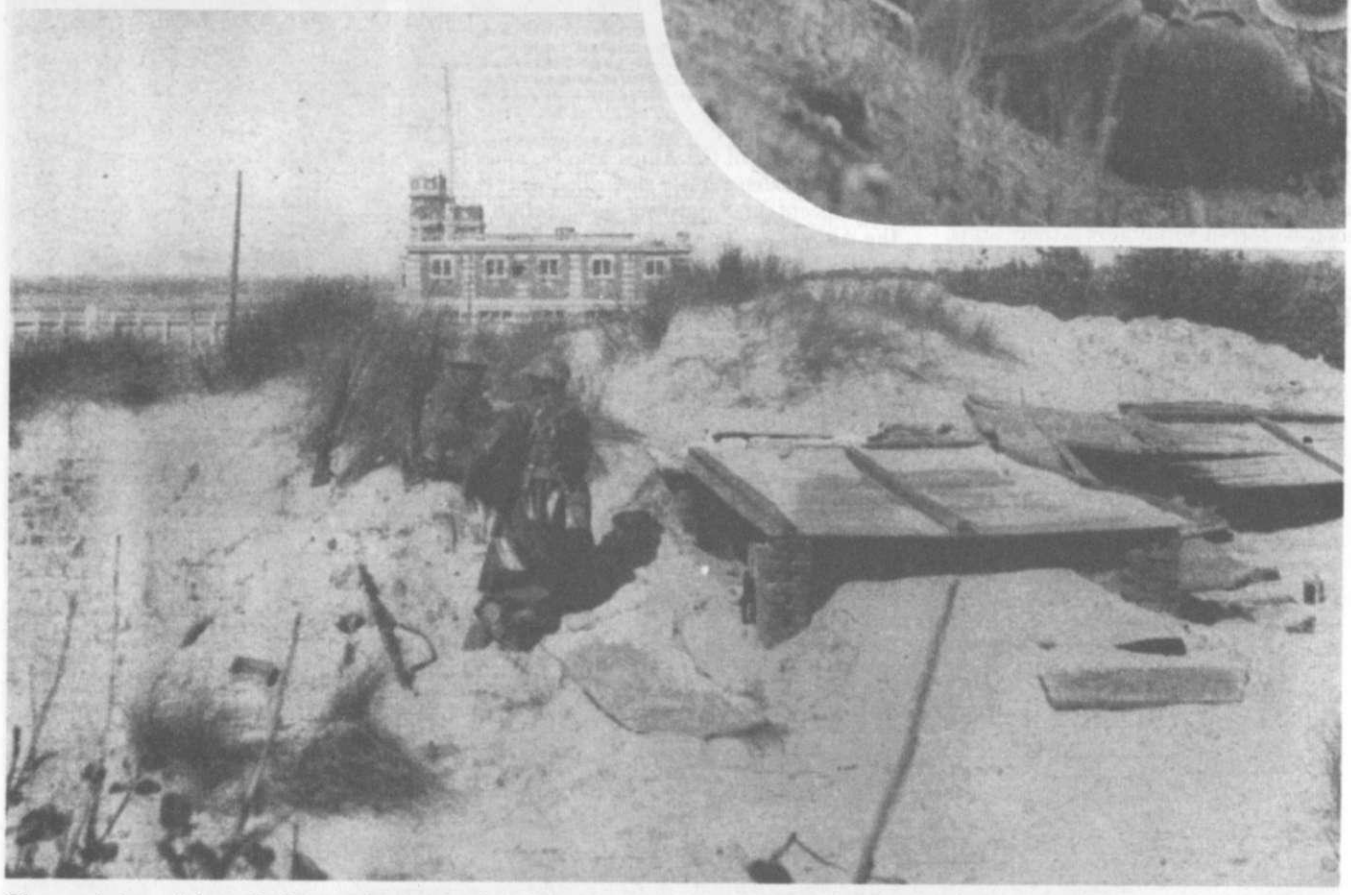
Into Dunkirk poured a stream of men, British and French, dead tired after days and nights of constant fighting, but still with plenty of fight in them. From the old Channel port, as we tell in another page, four-fifths of the B.E.F. and thousands of the poilus were evacuated, and by June 2 what men had hardly dared hope for had been successfully achieved. The Germans had failed in their main object—to surround and annihilate the Allied armies in the north.

But, to quote the King, "while we acclaim this great feat, in which our French Allies, too, have played so important a part, we think with heartfelt sympathy of the loss and sufferings of those brave men whose self-sacrifice has turned disaster into triumph."

The B.E.F. Marched to Dunkirk to Glory's Tune



This, one of the first photographs of men of the B.E.F. in action, shows a little party of heroes on the beach between Dunkirk and Ostend. They are sheltering under broken concrete piles of the sea-wall from the frequent and intense Nazi air attacks.



These exclusive and dramatic close-up photographs of the fighting in Flanders are of men of the B.E.F. who fought and marched for twenty days. Those in the photograph, centre right, are holding a railway embankment to the north-west of Brussels. The improvized air-raid shelters on the sand dunes at Nieuport (at the bottom of the page) are all the protection these men have ; the house in the background was actually in enemy hands.

Photos, Exclusive to The War Illustrated

The B.E.F. Lives On to Fight Another Day

In spite of the most desperate efforts on the part of the Germans, at least four-fifths of the B.E.F. were extricated from their perilous position in Flanders and conveyed in safety to England. Here we give in brief the story of as remarkable a feat of arms as the history of war can show.

WHEN King Leopold ordered the surrender of the Belgian Army on May 28 things looked black indeed for the B.E.F. and the French northern army under General Blanchard. For days past the German mechanized units had been exercising an ever-increasing pressure on their right flank, and now their left, too, was imperilled, as 200,000 Belgians, laying down their arms, left a gap through which the Germans might soon pour.

The bases of Boulogne and Calais were already occupied by the enemy, and now Ostend was similarly barred; only Dunkirk was left, and to Dunkirk hundreds of thousands of Allied troops now made their way.

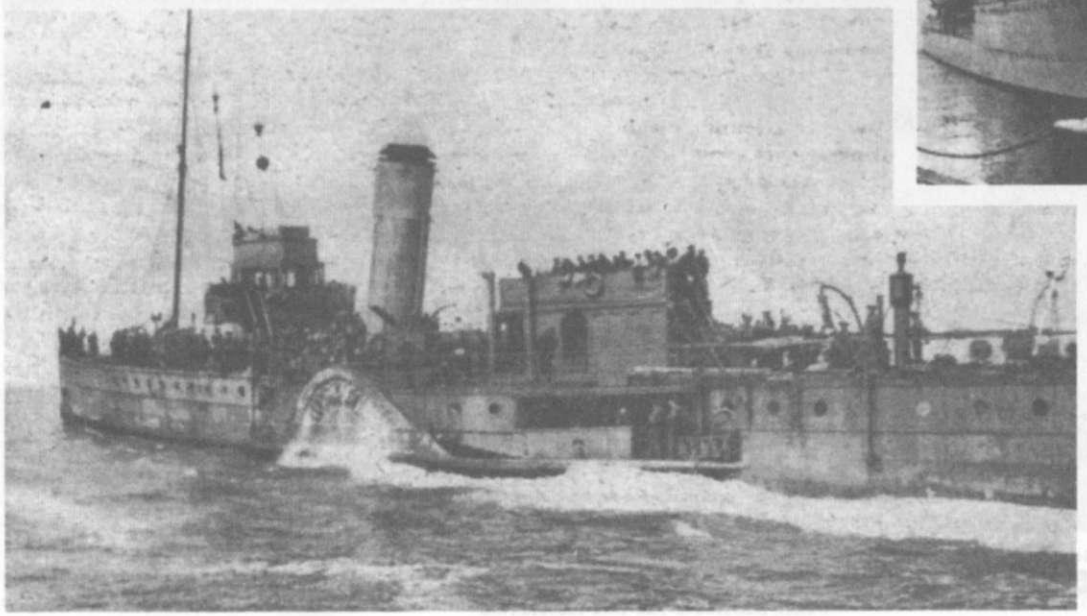
There developed a battle, a series of rearguard actions—the greatest rearguard action ever recorded in the whole history of war. On three sides the men, French and British, were hemmed in by the foe, who flung into the fight a tremendous superiority of men and material, while the skies above were black with his bombers. Already the Germans were proclaiming that the destruction of the Allied armies would be the matter of a few hours, and their official communiqué brushed aside the suggestion of evacuation by sea with the confident remark: "Our dive bombers will take care of that." Both in London and in Paris there was intense pessimism, and obviously-inspired pronouncements sought to prepare the way for the news that, if not the whole, at least a large part of the Allied armies would soon be forced to lay down their arms.

Yet in a few days the situation was transformed—transformed because of the dogged bravery, the indomitable tenacity, of the soldiers of the Allied armies, and of what Mr. Eden rightly described as "the magnificent and untiring cooperation of the Allied Navies and Air Forces."

In his speech on June 4 Mr. Churchill said that the B.E.F. would be reconstituted under its gallant Commander-in-Chief, Lord Gort, seen above entering the War Office after his return from Dunkirk. *Photo, Associated Press*

First, a number of British troops were sent to fill the gap left by Leopold's defection; then, too, a number of picked divisions were given the task of keeping back the enemy while their comrades were withdrawn to Dunkirk. Slowly, step by step, hour by hour, the loop withdrew into itself as the Allies, fighting side by side, often indeed mingled in the comradeship of battle, retreated towards the coast. Great were the demands made on the men to whom was entrusted the task of securing the withdrawal, many of whom paid for their comrades' safety with their own lives. Yet never for a moment was there a sign of wavering, of indecision, of the spirit of "the devil take the hindmost." Some of our finest regiments found their place in the rearguard, and well did they live up to the reputation their predecessors had won.

By the night of Wednesday, May 29—the day following that of the Belgian capitulation—the B.E.F. were enclosed within a triangle whose base was the coastline of some 20 miles from Nieuport to slightly beyond Dunkirk, while the rearguard was fighting in its apex only some 30 miles away on the river Lys near Armentières. On the next day, May 30, it was reported that the Germans had thrown into the battle forty divisions, supported by the majority of their mechanized divisions, and they were now attacking from two



H.M.S. "Basilisk," above, was one of the six destroyers stated in the Admiralty communiqué of June 3 to have been sunk off Dunkirk. She had a tonnage of 1,360, and was under the command of Commander M. Richmond. Left is one of the paddle-steamers used in the evacuation, loaded with soldiers. Their shallow draught made such ships most valuable in this work.

Photos, G.P.U. and Keystone

'Next Time Victory Will Be With Us'

THE words at the head of this page were spoken by General Lord Gort on his arrival in England from Dunkirk on June 1. The photographs we give here of soldiers, British, French, and French-Colonial, crowding to the windows of the trains that brought them inland from the ports at which they disembarked, show men (and some A.T.S. girls!) most of whom are tired out but none downhearted. A great welcome awaited them all along the line, and when the trains stopped, food, cigarettes and chocolate were showered upon them by civilians. Their first thought was to tell their relations of their safety; after that, something to eat, then—a good sleep.

At Dunkirk Tragedy Was Turned into Triumph

These men are at a rest camp in England to which they were taken immediately after their return from Dunkirk. After the inferno through which they had passed, they found it heavenly to lie at ease among the buttercups in an English meadow.

Nurses were at the stations at which wounded men of the B.E.F. arrived, ready to minister to them before they went off to hospital. Here one is giving a drink with a feeding-cup to a wounded man who cannot raise his head. *Photos, "Daily Mirror"*

directions—from Bruges towards Nieuport and the improvized Allied line on the Yser, and from the south along the "line of the Flanders hills"—Mont Kemmel, Mont Rouve, and Mont des Cats. Here they had driven in a wedge between the British and the French Army of General Prioux, which had been literally cutting its way through the German lines, often fighting on all sides at once, from its positions near Lille, now in German hands. The vanguard of Prioux's army, consisting of two divisions, succeeded in reaching Dunkirk on May 30, but General Prioux himself was claimed by the Germans as a prisoner. By French and British alike every yard of territory was disputed with what the Germans admitted was "desperate personal courage" which had "exacted severe sacrifices" from the attackers. Still, however, they boasted that "the British Expeditionary Force has completely disintegrated. It has fled to the sea, leaving behind all its war material."

Once again the Nazi claims were falsified by the event. So far from having disintegrated, the B.E.F. was intact and putting up a magnificent defence. Its withdrawal was being executed according to plan, and as the men went back they blew up bridges and carried out demolitions which seriously hindered the enemy's progress. At the same time the R.A.F. continued to fling a protecting curtain of fire about the retreating army, and attacked with success the marching columns and assault troops of the enemy.

By now many thousands of the retreating troops had arrived at Dunkirk, where amid the sand dunes and tufted grass of the Channel beaches they lay for hours—some of them for days—hungry and thirsty, periodically bombed and machine-gunned by low-flying 'planes, yet all the time maintaining perfect discipline, raising never a whisper of complaint and patiently awaiting the orders of their officers to embark. Some even played football in the intervals of air bombardment. To Dunkirk and to the shallow beaches came a vast and motley armada—ships of every sort and size, from destroyers and gun boats of the Royal Navy to private yachts, fishing vessels, lifeboats, pleasure steamers, and even a fire float of the London Fire Brigade. In all 222 British naval vessels and 665 other British craft took part in the evacuation, not to mention a large number of French ships.

In their escape all of the British legions went not scatheless, as the Germans with every weapon in their well-stocked armoury strove to hinder and halt the embarkation. Dunkirk and its surrounding beaches were bombed and shelled and machine-gunned with devilish intensity. "In that harbour," wrote the "New York Times," "in such a hell as never blazed on earth before, at the end of a lost battle, the rags and blemishes that had hidden the soul of democracy fell away. There, beaten but unconquered, in shining splendour, she faced the enemy, this shining thing in the souls of free men which Hitler cannot command. It is the great tradition of democracy. It is the future. It is victory."

While the men were being taken off, the rearguard continued to bar the way to the German hordes. The whole region round about was deliberately flooded by the Allied engineers, and a defence line was constructed—"the Corunna line"—on which French and British side by side "fought like cats." Behind this line the great mass of the Allied armies were enabled to escape that fate which only a few days before had seemed to be inevitable.

"The British Expeditionary Force," Mr. Anthony Eden proudly declared, "still exists, not as a handful of fugitives, but as a body of seasoned veterans"

Calais Said 'No Surrender!'

Above, badge of 60th Rifles; right, that of the Rifle Brigade.

What the French military spokesman described as "an exploit worthy of the most heroic examples of siege warfare" was the defence of Calais by a small force of British and French troops against a veritable host of Nazis. Below we give the story, so far as it has been told, of this most gallant episode in the great Battle for the Ports.

Above, badge of Qn. Victoria's Rifles, left, that of Royal Tank Regiment.

WHEN the "vast armoured scythe stroke," as Mr. Churchill called it, of the German mechanized horde reached the shores of the English Channel, battalions of the Rifle Brigade, the 60th Rifles (King's Royal Rifle Corps), and Queen Victoria's Rifles (a Territorial battalion, largely recruited from London business men, of the K.R.R.C.), supported by a battalion of the Royal Tank Regiment and 1,000 French soldiers—in all about 4,000 strong—were thrown into Calais with the order to defend it to the last.

Against this little garrison was thrown a great enemy host, superior in everything save valour. The troops defended the town and port step by step—as a German description of the fighting put it, "the enemy defended with courage and desperation. Furious fire beat on the Germans. In attacks by German infantry firing came from every window. House by house had to be conquered. The Englishmen had made every house a fortress. Then the Allies withdrew behind the walls of the old Citadel situated to the west of the town above the docks, and there in the deep casemates beneath the turfed earthworks which perpetuate the fame and skill of Vauban, Louis XIV's master-engineer, they put up a tremendous resistance against attack from land, sea, and air.

Breaches were made in the 300-year old walls, but the sheer drop from the top of the ramparts to the ground provided an insuperable obstacle to the German tanks, and the fire of the British and French riflemen continued to take heavy toll of the attacking hordes.

'Quiet Confidence, Grim Determination'

At the opening of the siege, when the British still had control of the port, one of our destroyers managed to make its way into the harbour and Vice-Admiral J. F. Somerville, who was on board, brought back a picture of a garrison hard pressed, surrounded by superior forces, but holding on grimly. "On shore," he said, "I found a brigadier, a very gallant brigadier, in command of our troops. His quiet confidence, his grim determination to hold out to the last man, was an inspiration to everyone there. No thought of surrender, no thought but to serve their country to the utmost of their endeavour and to the last man."

Shortly afterwards the R.A.F. was given the task of supplying the garrison, now withdrawn to the Citadel. Taking off from an airfield in the south of England, a number of 'planes—in all thirty-nine were engaged in the operation—dropped on the Citadel a number of containers each carrying 10 gallons of water and fitted with parachutes that opened automatically as soon as they were released. When after their twenty minutes' flight the airmen approached Calais they found the town in flames and their objective was half-hidden by a pall of smoke. Despite heavy anti-aircraft fire, which brought down one of the 'planes and hit many others, our aircraft came down to fifty feet above the Citadel to make sure of their aim. A few hours later other 'planes dropped quantities of small-arm ammunition and hand grenades into the Citadel. At that time none of the defenders could be seen, but there was no doubt that the garrison was still holding out, for the roar of battle continued.

Here is the main gate of the Citadel of Calais, in which men from the regiments whose badges and names are given in this page, supported by some French troops, made that heroic stand which was of such immense value in saving the B.E.F.

At the opening of the action the British brigadier was given an hour to surrender, and according to the German description already quoted, his reply was brief: "The answer is no!" "He spurned the offer," said Mr. Churchill, in the course of his statement in the House of Commons on June 3, "and four days of intense street fighting passed before the silence reigned over Calais which marked the end of a memorable resistance."

'Thus Was Dunkirk Kept Open'

"Only thirty survivors," went on the Prime Minister, "were brought off by the Navy, and we do not know the fate of their comrades. Their sacrifice, however, was not in vain. At least two armoured divisions, which otherwise would have been turned against the British Expeditionary Force, had to be sent for to overcome them. They added another page to the glories of the Light Division. The time gained enabled the Gravelines waterline to be flooded and held by the French troops, and thus it was that the port of Dunkirk was kept open."

Queen Victoria's Rifles, the Territorial battalion of the K.R.R.C., was in training on the South Coast when the Nazi rush against the Channel Ports took place. They were ordered instantly to proceed to Calais, where, in the defence of the Citadel, they gained immortal fame. They were in training as a light motorized unit mounted on motor-cycles.

Under a Tornado of Fire They Left Boulogne

Following the rapid advance of the German hordes on the Channel Ports, it became necessary, on May 23, to evacuate the British troops from Boulogne. Here is a description from the pen of a Naval Eyewitness of this feat most gallantly effected

As soon as the evacuation of Boulogne became imperative, a demolition party consisting of seamen, Royal Marines and a small detachment of the Royal Engineers was rushed across the Channel in a destroyer. They reached the main jetty at Boulogne in the forenoon, and the naval party was at once landed to hold the railway station, fit the demolition charges and earmark all the bridges, cranes, lock-gates and so on, which should be destroyed when the time came. Already the Germans were closing in on the town with light mechanized vehicles followed by tanks and motorized field guns, and small parties of German infantry were coming down the streets on the outskirts of the town.

In view of these developments, the naval and military officers conferred, and soon came to the conclusion that the town could not be held. The Germans already held the higher ground commanding the town and harbour, and were massing more troops and guns.

DEMOLITION of all the bridges and important points was decided upon, and small parties of seamen went out with their parcels of explosives. The enemy was closing in. Already the swing bridges giving access to the inner part of the harbour were under the fire of machine-guns at a range of a few hundreds of yards. The explosives were placed by the bridges, though they could not be destroyed until the last of our troops had withdrawn.

Meanwhile, in another part of the harbour was a large crane with a wet dock beside it containing a naval trawler. Both might be captured by the enemy, so the officer in charge decided to destroy them, with the power-house and pumping station for the dock, without waiting for further orders. While all this was going on the enemy were all round the docks at a range of about 400 yards, and snipers were within fifty yards of the crane.

The fire from field and machine-guns continued. So did the bombing. Then came the long-expected order—"Complete demolition."

THE floating dock was sunk, and machinery, power-houses and the like blown up. The hinges of some dock-gates were demolished, another trawler, another crane—anything and everything that might be of use to the enemy. The work was necessarily hurried, and in the midst of it the demolition parties were harassed by a dive-bombing and machine-gun attack by fifteen enemy aircraft. These were the ones put to flight by R.A.F. fighters.

Further charges were placed to make certain of the sluice gates and bridge. The Germans were very close, and coming nearer all the time. At this period a considerable number of our troops were sheltering in the sheds round the railway station, and more were arriving every minute.

Evacuation having been decided upon, two destroyers came into the harbour and alongside, and steamed stern-first again out of the narrow entrance with all the troops they could cram on board.

Then three more destroyers came in and alongside, to be fired upon furiously by enemy field-guns concealed on a wooded hill to the north of the harbour and overlooking it, and a number of pom-poms and machine-guns in the second-story windows of an hotel. The range was no more than 800 yards. Then several enemy heavy tanks came down the hill and on to the foreshore.

The troops, meanwhile, were on the jetty and embarking in the destroyer alongside. Their courage and bearing were magnificent, even under a tornado of fire with casualties occurring every second. They were as steady as though on parade.

BUT the destroyers had not been idle. Their 4.7's, 4-inch, pom-poms and machine-guns were in hot action, plastering the hillsides and the German field-guns in them at point-blank range, blasting the hotel opposite until the pom-poms and machine-guns were silenced in showers of hurtling masonry and shell fragments. The first shot fired at the tanks missed. The second was a direct hit which caused one of them to capsize and "go spinning over and over like a child doing a cart-wheel," as said an onlooker. A third was knocked out with a direct hit. The others retired with celerity.

"By God!" said one of the more senior military officers, voicing his admiration, "they were absolutely magnificent." What the Army thought of the Navy, the sailors also thought of the soldiers. "They stood there like rocks and without giving a damn for anything," said one naval officer.

THOSE three destroyers cast off with full loads of soldiers on board and went stern-first out to sea through the narrow entrance. One of them was slightly on fire; all of them were listing over heavily with the number of men on board. Getting them safely away and out to sea in such conditions involved a fine display of seamanship, particularly as the tide had fallen and there was a danger of them grounding. There was very little water under their bottoms.

It was now evening, and there were still many troops ashore, and more still coming over the bridges under heavy fire. Still more were under the doubtful cover of the station buildings. The firing and the bombing continued. The troops seemed never to end, and the enemy was still advancing. Most of the naval demolition party had gone in the destroyers, leaving the officer in charge, a sub-lieutenant, a petty officer and one rating.

They blew up the bridge when the last soldier had passed over it.

Darkness came, and at ten o'clock the railway station was still crammed with men, with the Germans very close and advancing. But word had gone forth to the Navy that the evacuation was not complete, and at about eleven o'clock another destroyer nosed into the darkened harbour and alongside, being bombed and fired upon as she came. She also was in danger of grounding, but moved stern first out to sea with her quota and a list of fifteen degrees. Then two more destroyers arrived and evacuated the troops that remained, with their many wounded. It was a miracle that all of these destroyers were not sunk.

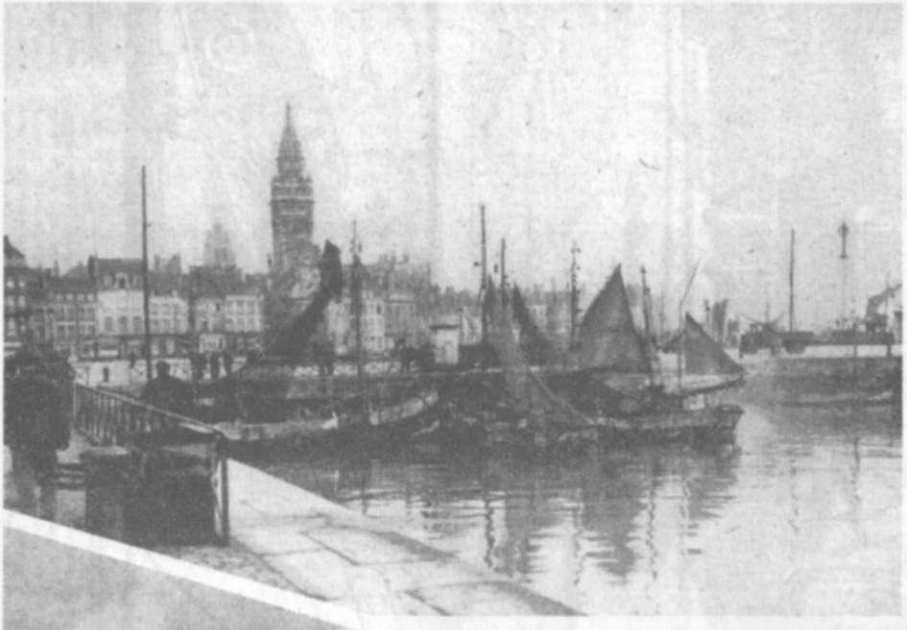
One of the first aims during the evacuation of Boulogne by the B.E.F. was to get the wounded away. The ambulance drivers and attendants worked with the utmost devotion at this difficult task and it was conducted with an ordered regularity beyond praise. Left, ambulances have just arrived at the quay and the stretcher cases are being carried on board a hospital ship (see page 620). Right are some of the W.A.T.S. who drove the ambulances with heroic courage.

Photos from a War Office Official Film

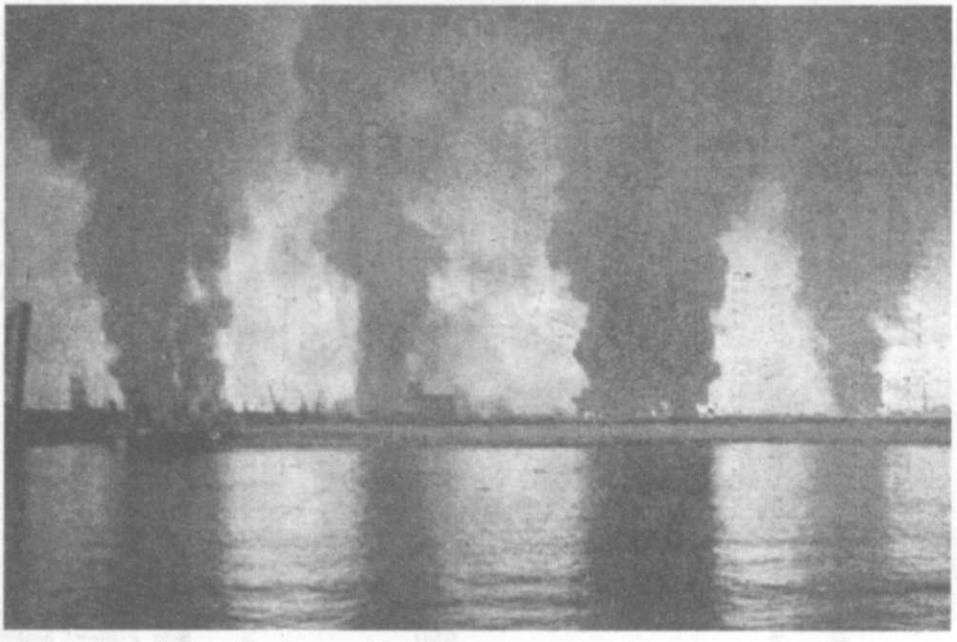
France's Navy Was Superb at Dunkirk

The height-finder (top left) is attached to a permanent battery of A.A. guns defending the French coast. Above is seen Admiral Abrial, valiant commander of the French naval forces defending Dunkirk.

THE successful withdrawal of the great majority of the B.E.F. from their perilous situation in Flanders, following the surrender of the Belgian army, depended on the Allies being able to hold Dunkirk, the only Channel port left open to their retreat. Dunkirk was defended by units of the French Navy, under the command of Admiral Abrial. Some 300 French warships and merchant vessels assisted in the evacuation, and five destroyers and two torpedo boats were lost in the operation. Its garrison was later strengthened by men of General Prioux's advance guard, who had fought their way back from beyond Lille.



This view of Dunkirk (left) shows the busy port as it was in peacetime. During May, 1940, it was transformed into an armed fortress, but by June 4, when the Germans entered, it was a mass of smoking ruins.



Facing nothing but the open sea this marine (left) is prepared to raise the alarm if an invasion of the French coast should be attempted. The view of Dunkirk (above) was taken from on board a destroyer during the evacuation, when big fires were raging in the town as a result of enemy attacks by land and air.

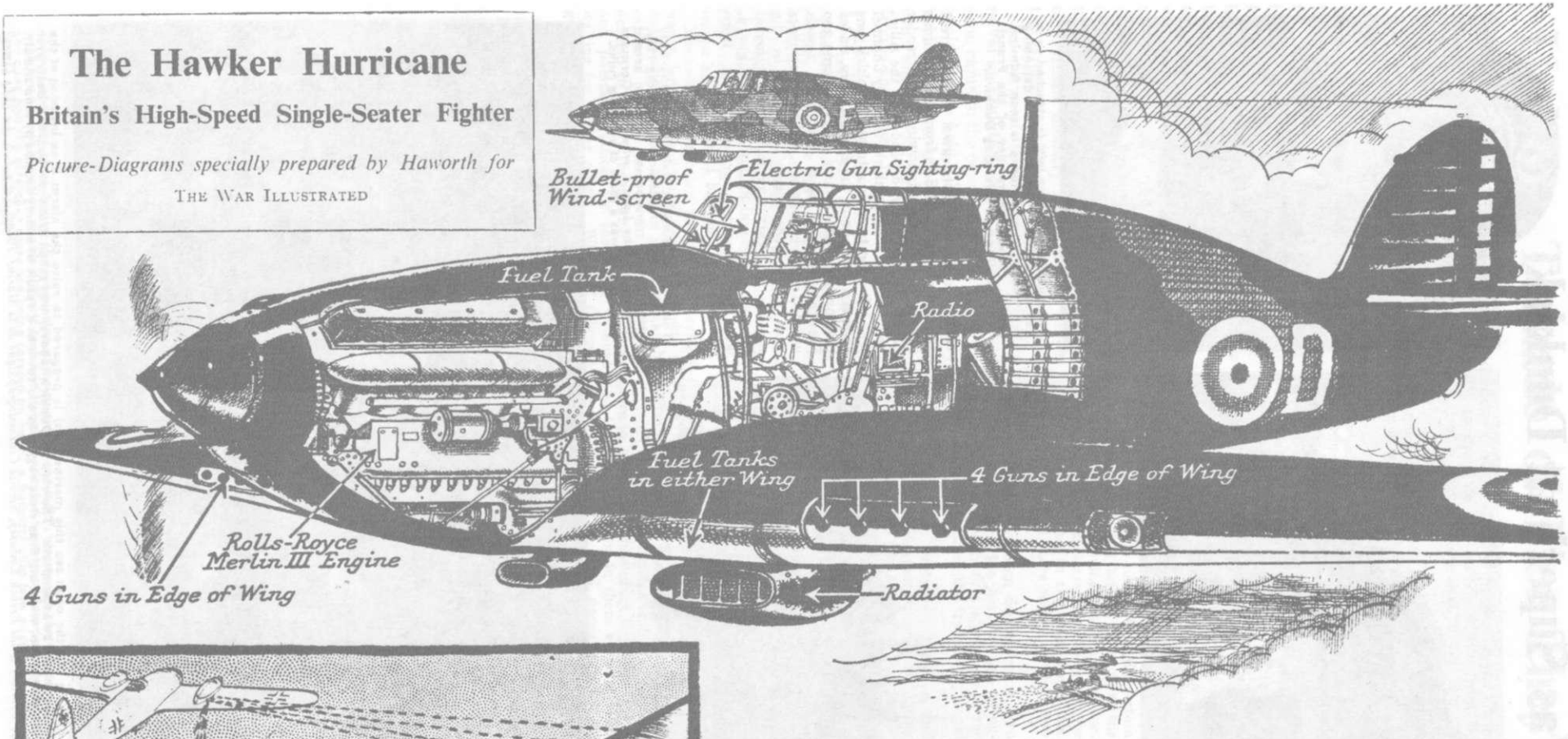
Photos, by Courtesy of the French Embassy, Service Cinématographique de la Marine, Planet News, E.N.A., "The Times"

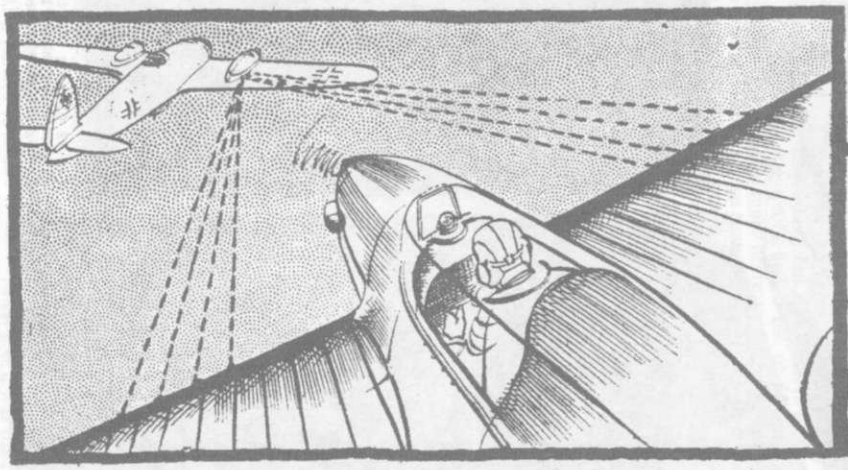
The Hawker Hurricane

Britain's High-Speed Single-Seater Fighter

Picture-Diagrams specially prepared by Haworth for

THE WAR ILLUSTRATED





The purpose of the single-seater fighter is to intercept the enemy before he reaches his objective. And the 990 h.p. Hawker Hurricane with a top speed of 335 m.p.h., and a high rate of climb, being able to reach 19,680 feet in nine minutes, is ideal for the job. It has great endurance, a very heavy armament, and is extremely manoeuvrable, owing to the low wing-loading of 24·7 lbs. per square foot, as against the 31·4 lbs. per square foot of the German Messerschmitt 109 which has none of these advantages.

Hurricane Armament

The Hurricane is armed with eight machine-guns mounted in the wings, trained to a point about 200 yards ahead of the machine and each firing 1,200 rounds per minute. The long belts of ammunition contained in metal "tanks" in the wing are made up of armour-piercing, incendiary, and tracer bullets, which are carefully arranged to follow in the order calculated to give the best results. The effect is illustrated in page 631.

Refuelling with Special Petrol

When Hurricanes on patrol come in to refuel, special refuelling-lorries which are capable of delivering a great number of gallons per minute attend to several machines at once. The petrol used by these fighters is usually 100-octane fuel, which allows the Rolls-Royce "Merlin" III engine to develop a maximum of 1,050 h.p. Incidentally, the Germans are short of this grade of petrol and the Messerschmitts usually fly on 87-octane fuel.

R.A.F. Triumphs Daily Over Hordes of Nazi Airmen

In one week-end, May 31-June 2, according to the Air Ministry, British fighter pilots destroyed or severely damaged 169 German 'planes over Dunkirk. Though they came over in clouds "like gnats on a summer day," the R.A.F. never hesitated to attack whatever the odds. Here are some episodes displaying their invincible spirit.

ALMOST incredible heights of valour and self-sacrifice are disclosed by reports now available about the deeds of our airmen in the Low Countries and in France during the last week of May. The destruction of the Maastricht bridges (see photograph in page 581) is an example. All the bridges but one over the Meuse near Maastricht had been destroyed to stop their use by the enemy, but over that one were pouring the armoured units of the Nazis. It was heavily defended, and although eight attacks had been made by the R.A.F. no direct hit had been scored. At the squadron H.Q. the C.O. called for volunteers to finish the job, and all the pilots stepped forward. Lots were drawn and four crews chosen. Fighter escorts accompanied them and they set off. Diving low amid a hurricane of fire they bombed and destroyed the bridge and closed the path to the invaders. Out of the four crews one man came back.

While the B.E.F. in Flanders was fighting its desperate rearguard actions with the enclosing Nazi forces it received magnificent aid from the Royal Air Force. By day our medium bombers attacked the enemy's lines of communications, destroying roads, bridges, and dumps. When night fell the R.A.F. heavy bombers continued the task.

Twelve Defiants Shot Down 37 Nazis

More spectacular, perhaps, was the work of the fighters. A squadron of 12 British Defiants was on patrol duty in the region of Dunkirk on May 29. In the morning they met more enemy fighters and dive-bombers than they could count; they shot down 17 fighters and one bomber. In the afternoon they brought down at least 19 and possibly 21 enemy bombers. All the British machines returned safely. In three days this Defiant squadron destroyed 50 enemy aircraft.

Here is a summary of a fighter pilot's experiences during one day (May 29) near that same storm-centre of Dunkirk. With eight other fighters he was on patrol when they encountered a like number of Me 109's and a dog-fight followed. He attacked and set on fire one enemy aircraft; he then tackled another and fired one burst from astern, causing the enemy's port wing to fold up. As he levelled out a Junkers bomber flew across his path and he did a quarter attack; the enemy's starboard engine emitted black smoke and the German half rolled into the sea. Then our pilot was hit underneath by a cannon shell, but he did a beam attack on a Me 110 that flew past; the Messerschmitt turned on its back and fell into the sea. The British pilot then saw about 80 enemy machines proceeding in the direction of Dover, and some of them turned on him. He headed for home, but his Hurricane was hit a number of times and he could not evade the enemy. His engine stopped, and fire broke out at the wing roots. He got out over the port side and "took a header off the main plane." His lifebelt kept him up until he was picked up by a paddle steamer that took him to Margate.

German Air Losses

To April 30, 1940

Total announced West Front, North Sea, Britain, Scandinavia	195
Unofficial estimate of additional 'planes damaged in Norway	200

Losses May 1—9

Published figures only	11

Losses May 10—June 5

Air Ministry estimate, including published losses of 978 'planes	2,000
Grand Total	**2,406**

Note.—It is considered by many authorities that these figures are underestimates, and that the probable total is in the region of 3,000. The total loss of pilots and other flying personnel is estimated at over 2,000.

So the task went on through those days when the whole Empire waited in tense expectancy for news of the evacuation of our men, subjected to an ordeal that day by day increased in severity. When towards the end of the week the Nazis were closing in and Dunkirk was under heavy artillery fire, our bombers and fighters saved countless lives by the aid given to troops fighting rearguard actions. Provisions and supplies were dropped to our men from the air. Over the Dunkirk area a ceaseless patrol went on.

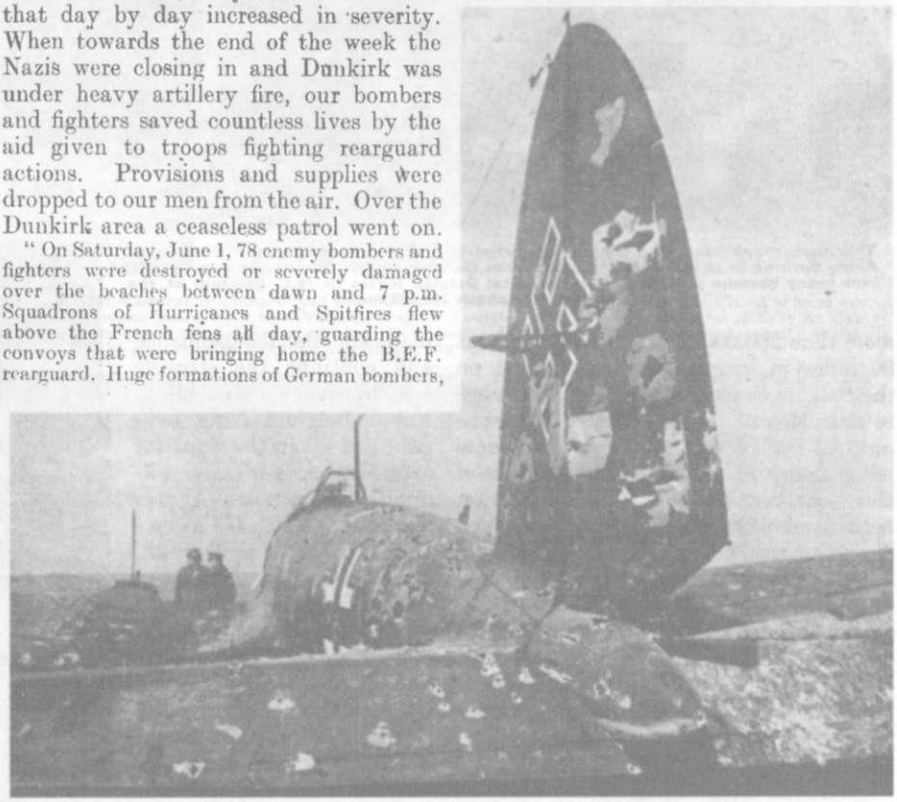
"On Saturday, June 1, 78 enemy bombers and fighters were destroyed or severely damaged over the beaches between dawn and 7 p.m. Squadrons of Hurricanes and Spitfires flew above the French fens all day, guarding the convoys that were bringing home the B.E.F. rearguard. Huge formations of German bombers, escorted by fighters, came out and attempted to sink the ships. They did not lack targets, for the sea was thick with craft of all kinds. But when they attempted to bomb, our fighters attacked and drove them off. Most of the bombs fell into the sea. Many Junkers, Heinkels, Dorniers and Messerschmitts soon crashed into the sea after their bombs; 32 fighters were certainly destroyed."

Three Hudson aircraft of the Coastal Command attacked 40 enemy bombers. Three of the enemy were shot down, two dived away out of control, and two others were damaged. The Hudsons were unharmed and continued their patrol.

Thus it was that the Premier was able to announce on June 4 that the Dunkirk evacuation was a great trial of strength between the British and German Air Force. The Germans tried hard and they were frustrated. All our types and all our pilots were vindicated—Hurricane, Spitfire, the new Defiant—as superior to what they had to face. An independent American tribute may be quoted:

The withdrawal was accomplished primarily because of British local superiority in the air. This may sound astonishing to those who over-estimated the strength of the German air force, and I do not underestimate its quantitative importance. But it remains true that British fighters like Spitfires, Hurricanes and Defiants are masters of any German chasers, and actually achieved mastery in the air over the Channel.

Magnificent was the heroism and endurance of pilots and crews alike.



This Nazi bomber, a Heinkel III K, was brought down behind the French lines by fighter 'planes. It shows a particularly good example of the effect of concentrated machine-gun fire available in such machines as the Hurricane illustrated opposite. There could be no hope for the crew of a bomber subjected to so fierce an attack. *Photo, Planet News*

Belgium Surrenders at Her King's Order

With stunning force came the news on May 28 of King Leopold's capitulation to the Germans. Not yet can the full story of the treacherous surrender be told, but here we recount the events which led up to it and venture something by way of explanation.

WHEN Belgium was invaded in the early hours of May 10 an army of some 400,000 manned the frontier defences and prepared to put up a stern resistance to the invader. Compared with their predecessors of 1914 they were both more numerous and better equipped, but failure to destroy a bridge at Maastricht opened an avenue to the enemy which he was quick to seize. Within a few hours the Belgians were falling back on both banks of the Meuse, until on May 14 their right flank was strongly supported by the B.E.F. and by divisions of the French First Army rushed to their support from the neighbourhood of Sedan.

Shortly afterwards, as a direct result of the succour so instantly and willingly afforded, a great bulge developed in the French line and the Allies in the north were again compelled to retreat. On May 17 the Germans entered Brussels in triumph for the second time in 26 years, and on the following day Antwerp, too, fell. By this time the Belgian army had been reduced to a fighting strength of no more than 200,000 men; their line, about 80 miles in length, ran from Heyst on the Belgian coast just north of Zeebrugge to near Menin. Their situation was serious, for few of their 300 aeroplanes were left; many of their guns and much of their transport had been put out of action because the German aircraft had killed the horses, and few of their light armoured vehicles were serviceable. Food and munitions were still to be had, but the troops were dog-tired and they had no reserves. Nevertheless, observers reported that the Belgians of 1940 were as brave as those of 1914, and at Liége and Namur some of the forts held out despite encirclement for days by the German hordes.

Such was the position when on May 25 King Leopold, Commander-in-Chief of the Belgian Army, seems to have decided on capitulation. Maybe he was appalled by the slaughter resulting from the indiscriminate bombing by the German aeroplanes, or he may have taken a hopeless view of the Allied military position in general and of the Belgian in particular. Whatever the reasons that actuated him he was firmly resolved. Early on the morning of May 25 M. Pierlot, the Belgian Premier, and M. Spaak, Foreign Minister, and two of their colleagues had a last interview with Leopold at the Château Wynendael, near Thourout. In view of the danger of the King's capture or enforced capitulation, they asked the King to hand over the command of the army to a general of their own nomination, and that he himself should come to France. Leopold blankly refused.

Leopold Hoists the White Flag

That same evening (so it is said) M. Reynaud told M. Pierlot that he had indubitable evidence that King Leopold intended to betray them; the unhappy Belgian replied that whatever happened the Belgian Government would maintain its independence and continue the struggle side by side with its allies. But in Belgium King Leopold had given the word for capitulation. An Order was signed in his name—it was reported that General Michiels, his Chief of Staff, had refused to countersign it—forbidding all movements of Belgian troops and the destruction of their arms and supplies, and instructing the men to line up along the sides of the roads and indicate their positions by displaying white flags. Worse still, the German troops were to be allowed to pass through their ranks unmolested right up to the sea. The royal command was obeyed; the Belgian troops laid down their arms at 4 a.m. on May 28, and so the left flank of the Allies was exposed to the enemy.

On the morrow of the capitulation the world rang with denunciations of Leopold's treachery. Comment and criticism which had hitherto perforce been kept underground were now given full vent, and many indications of the King's anti-French, if not pro-German, attitude were revealed. It was recalled how in 1936 he repudiated the Locarno alliance, and how marked had been the influence of his Bavarian-born mother.

One fact, at least, was known, and that was sufficiently damnable: that the ruler who had invited the British and French to come to the assistance of himself and his stricken people had now come to terms with the enemy without so much as giving his allies even a few hours' warning of what he intended. So there descended on the French and British Armies the sweat and fury of the battle, on the Belgian Army the bitterness of defeat and on the Belgian people the grim servitude that Nazi rule brings in its train; while on Leopold the curtain descended as he withdrew behind the gates of the castle so considerately allotted him by the triumphant Fuehrer.

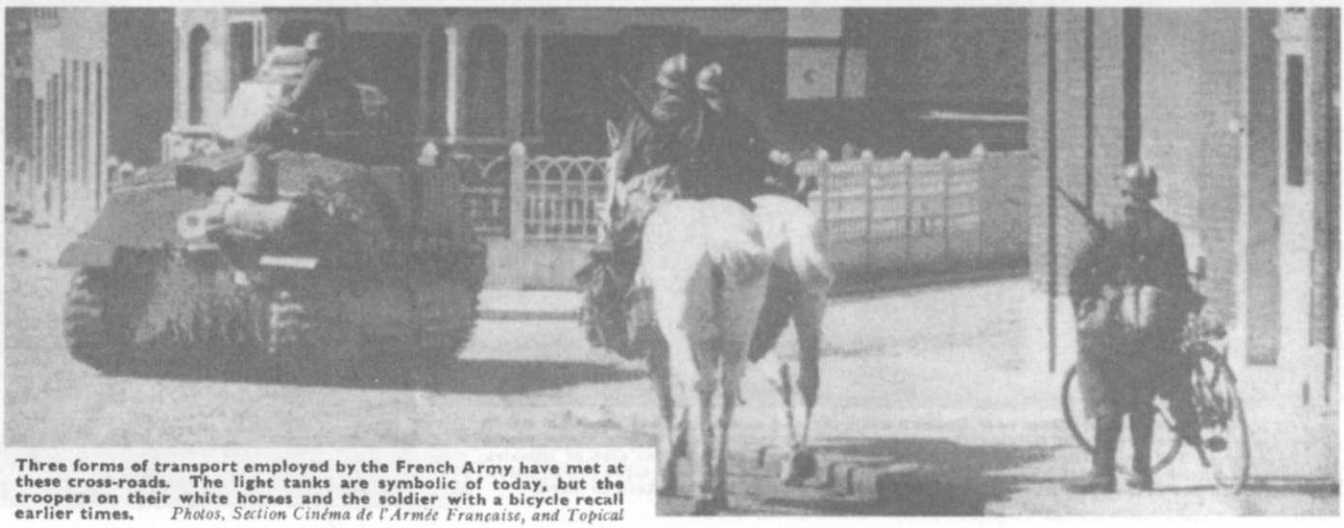
This photograph from German sources purports to show unarmed men of the Belgian Army flocking in to surrender. Apart from German claims it is not known exactly how many became prisoners, but the total Belgian forces in N.E. Belgium at the last amounted to about 200,000 men.

This photograph shows King Leopold III with General Denis, Minister of Defence in the Belgian Cabinet, reviewing a column of Belgian tanks.
Photos, E.N.A., Keystone

Prioux's Men Fought Side by Side With Gort's

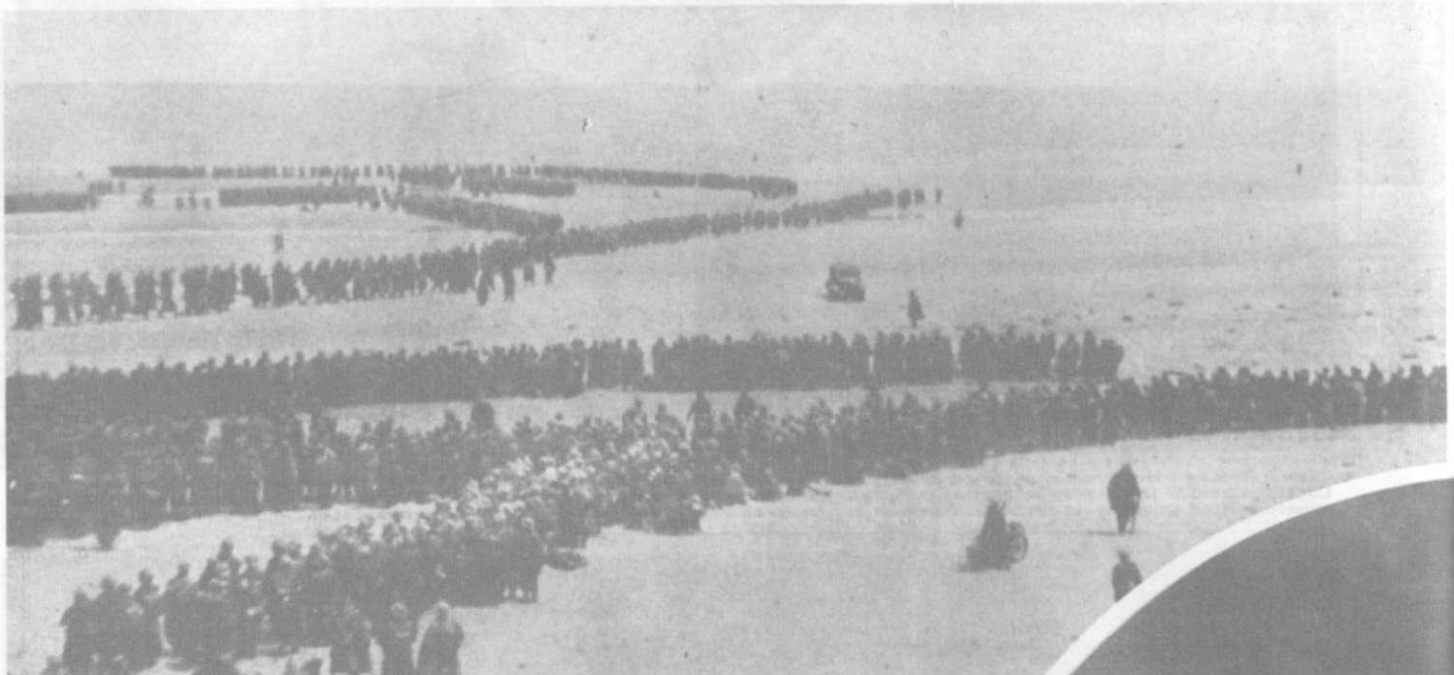
The blowing-up of the Flanders bridges was done by the French with thoroughness. Left is a column of smoke rising as a river bridge is destroyed ; above, remains of two railway bridges.

General Prioux (circle), whose name is associated with those of General Blanchard and Lord Gort in the wonderful retreat of the Allied armies on Dunkirk, served in 1914-18 as an infantryman, and later spent some years with the French Army in Tunisia. For his gallant stand at Lille he was created a Grand Officer of the Legion of Honour. The dragoons above are holding a post on the French side of one of the blown-up bridges. Right are some French motorized troops on a road in Belgium just before the retreat began.



Three forms of transport employed by the French Army have met at these cross-roads. The light tanks are symbolic of today, but the troopers on their white horses and the soldier with a bicycle recall earlier times. *Photos, Section Cinéma de l'Armée Française, and Topical*

Here on Dunkirk's Sands By a 'Miracle of Deliverance' the B.E.F. E



His Airmen Follow Hitler's 'Ice-Cold Brutal Policy'

To an American journalist Hitler is stated to have declared, "I follow an ice-cold and brutal policy. It has always been so and will remain so." In nothing had this been more clearly displayed than the orders to his airmen to strike at the civilians who, first bombed out of their homes, were mercilessly machine-gunned as they fled.

EVEN in days that now seemed very remote, when war was waged against the armed forces and not against harmless and innocent civilians, the approach of an invading army filled the roads in front for miles with a fleeing host of women, children and the older men, who, however, were unlikely deliberately to be singled out for attack.

Now all was changed, and terrorization of the civil population played a major part in the German scheme of invasion. A day or two after the Nazi assault on Holland a message of instruction to German airmen was intercepted by the Royal Air Force. It read: "Note—Civilian refugees also on the road. Harass these as much as possible." This expression of German terror tactics was circulated in plain language and was acknowledged by German pilots.

Aerial attack on refugees became a routine operation for the Luftwaffe. Said the special correspondent of "The Times" on May 14:

A grizzled 79-year-old Belgian farm labourer from the Ardennes . . . told me how he saw a long column of refugees, mostly women and children, raked by machine-gun fire from an aeroplane. As he overtook the main body he noticed the corpse of a small girl aged five or six lying in the roadway. There were machine-gun wounds through each arm and one in the head. A little farther on he noticed a weeping mother carrying . . . the dead body of her baby—another victim of German frenzy.

A British officer home from Flanders told of a stretch of road, crowded with refugees, which was gunned from the air by a Nazi 'plane. Afterwards, for a distance of 150 yards, both sides of the road were piled with dead bodies of people who had sought to escape by climbing the banks into fields and had then been cut down as with a scythe.

Even when refugees had got to the coast and had embarked on a British ship they were not safe from the bestial fury of the German airmen. A steamer that arrived at a southern port on May 19 with hundreds of refugees had been attacked with five bombs by two German bombers soon after leaving Belgium.

They Butchered Women and Children

At a French port two British hospital ships were bombed and set on fire on May 24. A survivor said:

"As the R.A.M.C. personnel and crews worked frantically to get the wounded ashore they were machine-gunned on the gangways. The aeroplanes showed no mercy. As the population streamed across the bridge to the road leading out of the town they flew only a few feet above and butchered the helpless women and children with their machine-guns. It was ghastly."

In Ostend the long-established American hospital was bombed and destroyed on May 28. Many wounded men were killed. Nazi attacks on ambulances became so vindictive that the committee in charge of the American volunteer ambulances serving in France ordered the obliteration of the Red Cross emblem on their vehicles.

"All our drivers agree that the Red Cross only attracts the attention of German pilots. In the past 10 days Nazi airmen have been bombing or machine-gunning our ambulances, sometimes from only 50 feet. The Red Cross no longer protects our men, and we are removing it in their interests."

When the Germans made their drive through north-eastern France towards the coast there was a panic evacuation of towns near the path of the advance. Roads became so choked with fleeing people that the task of the defence was much hampered. The British Air Ministry on May 22 said:

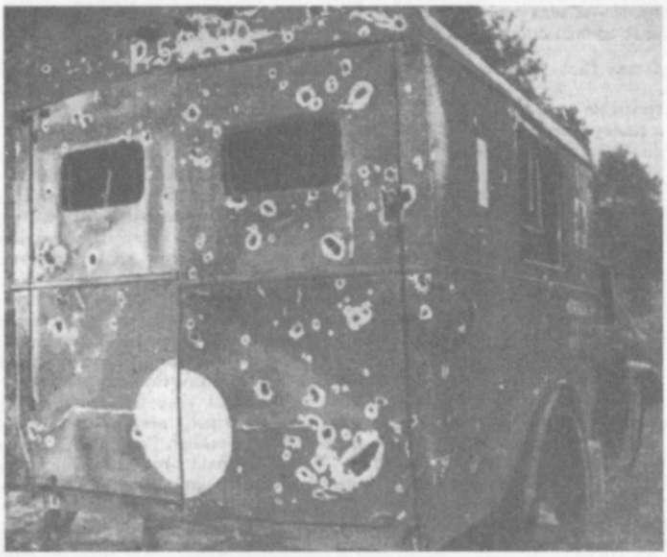
"From the air the head of the German advance presented at times a picture of utter chaos. Often bombing was made impossible because of the difficulty of identifying enemy columns between the streams of refugees. . . . On one enemy road reconnoitred at a height of 1,000 feet, some 40 to 50 green-painted German lorries were seen to be hopelessly intermingled with pedestrians, ambulances, civilian cars, tradesmen's vans and bicycles."

The Nazis had no scruples about clearing a road for their vehicles. Tanks charged deliberately down the highways, crushing all who were unable to get out of their path. Small wonder that our troops who witnessed such scenes of savagery were roused to a fury of indignation and a fierce determination to fight back at the Nazis.

The aim of such terrorist methods was twofold—to block the roads against the defence by filling them with a panic-stricken mass; and to sap the morale of the population. The second objective was identical with that aimed at by indiscriminate air bombing, but what the Nazis failed to perceive was that such methods might have an effect vastly different from that expected. A British newspaper correspondent stated a profound truth which exposed the futility of Nazi terrorism: "For one victim of that morning's raid a thousand hearts had been steeled."

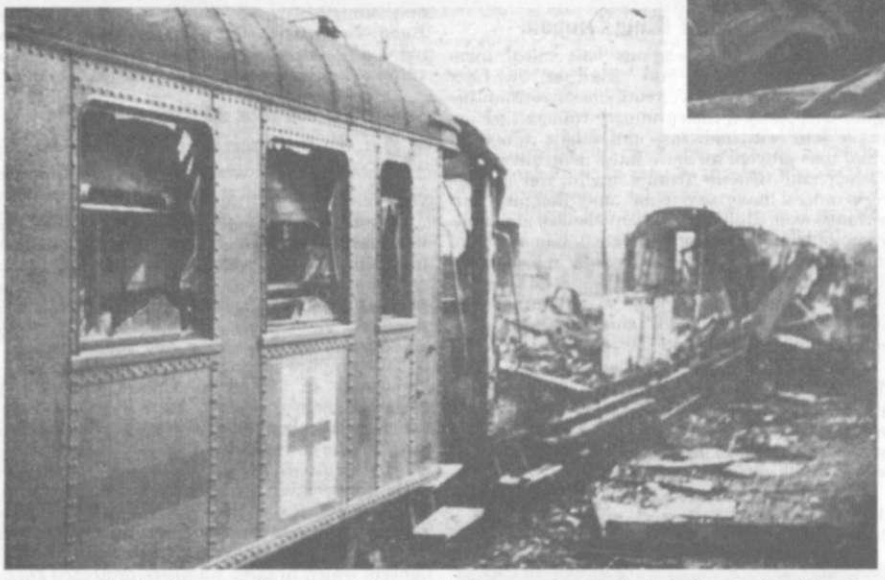
More poignant than many stories of Nazi brutalities is this photograph of an old lady screaming hysterically as, by the firm hand of a French soldier, she is led away from the scene of ruthless destruction. Repeated again and again, innumerable attacks upon old and young and helpless alike have resulted in scenes of suffering, panic and fear that neither pen nor camera can ever record. *Photo, Keystone*

Hospitals and Ambulances Make Good Targets!



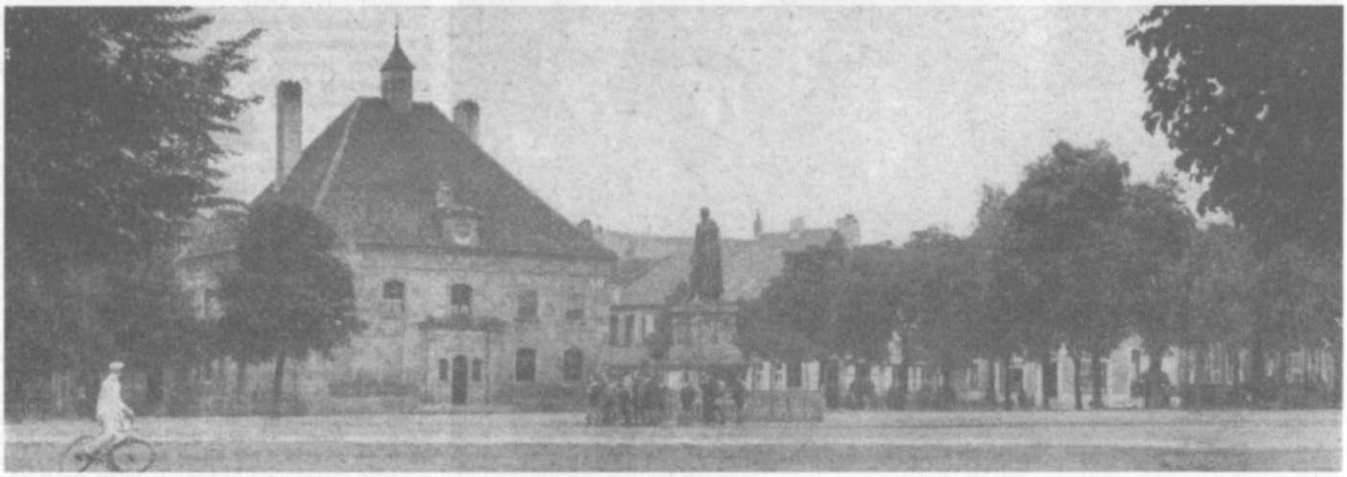
This French Red Cross ambulance bore all the markings required by international agreement. It stands here riddled with bullets by Nazi machine-gunners, obviously from such close range that the nature of the target must have been clearly visible.

In Belgium military hospitals were heavily bombed by Nazi airmen. Here is a ward of one of them after the death-dealing 'planes had passed over it.



These wrecked railway coaches are not the result of an accident, but of deliberate bombing by Nazi airmen in France. Some of the coaches were demolished and others were wrecked so completely that the wounded could have had little chance of surviving. So far from the Red Cross proving a protection, it seems to have been regarded by the Germans as a target.

DISCUSSING the brutality of Nazi methods of warfare, a Dutch journalist, broadcasting to Germany, pointedly asked : "What will happen to the name of Germany ? " Not only has the international symbol of mercy become a chosen target for bomb and machine-gun, but there is evidence to show that it is a deliberate policy to attack Red Cross hospitals, ambulances, trains and ships. The town of Phalsbourg in Alsace is a lasting example of the different views of France and Germany on humane warfare. In 1932 a French Army doctor, General Schickelé, at a conference in Madrid, suggested that certain towns should be "hospital towns" into which no unwounded soldiers would be allowed to enter and which should be regarded by all belligerents as inviolable. The suggestion was accepted in 1938 by nearly every country in the world, but diplomatic ratification was not achieved before war broke out.



The small town of Phalsbourg was the beginning of a wonderful attempt by the French to do something to mitigate the horrors of warfare by creating "hospital cities" which should be forbidden zones for all troops and clearly marked with huge red crosses that could be seen from a great height, and therefore would be immune from attack. In this town a huge Red Cross was painted in the square seen above, but that the Nazis would respect it was always extremely doubtful.

Photos, Section Cinéma de l'Armée, Planet News, and Dorien Leigh

IT WAS 'A COLOSSAL MILITARY DISASTER' BUT

Superbly phrased and powerfully delivered, Mr. Churchill's statement to the House of Commons on June 4 was more, very much more—it was a clarion call to the nation to gird up its loins and out of defeat to win completest victory.

FROM the moment that the French defences at Sedan and on the Meuse were broken at the end of the second week of May, began Mr. Churchill, only a rapid retreat to Amiens and the south could have saved the British and French Armies who had entered Belgium, but this strategic fact was not immediately realized.

Moreover, he went on, a retirement of this kind would have involved almost certainly the destruction of the fine Belgian Army, of over 20 divisions, and the abandonment of the whole of Belgium. Therefore, when the force and scope of the German penetration was realized, and when the new French Generalissimo, General Weygand, assumed command in place of General Gamelin, an effort was made by the French and British Armies in Belgium to keep on holding the right hand of the Belgians and to give their own right hand to a newly created French Army, which was to have advanced across the Somme to grasp it.

However, the German eruption swept like a sharp scythe around the right and rear of the Armies of the north. Eight or nine armoured divisions, each of about 400 armoured vehicles of different kinds, cut off all communications between us and the main French Armies.

'Armoured Scythe' in Action

IT severed our own communications for food and ammunition, which ran first to Amiens and afterwards through Abbeville, and it sheared its way up the coast to Boulogne and Calais, and almost to Dunkirk. Behind this armoured and mechanized onslaught came a number of German divisions in lorries, and behind them again there plodded, comparatively slowly, the dull, brute mass of the ordinary German army and German people, always so ready to be led to the trampling down in other lands of liberties and comforts which they have never known in their own.

AFTER referring to the heroic resistance put up by Boulogne and Calais (see pages 627-8) against the "vast armoured scythe," the Premier continued:

The time gained enabled the Gravelines waterlines to be flooded and to be held by the French troops. Thus it was that the port of Dunkirk was kept open.

When it was found impossible for the Armies of the north to reopen their communications to Amiens with the main French Armies only one choice remained. It seemed, indeed, forlorn. The Belgian British and French Armies were almost surrounded. Their sole line of retreat was to a single port and to its neighbouring beaches. They were pressed on every side by heavy attacks and far outnumbered in the air.

When a week ago today I asked the House to fix this afternoon as the occasion for a statement, I feared it would be my hard lot to announce from this box the greatest military disaster in our long history.

I thought—and some good judges agreed with me—that perhaps 20,000 or 30,000 men might be re-embarked. But it certainly seemed that the whole of the French First Army and the whole of the British Expeditionary Force north of the Amiens-Abbeville gap would be broken up in the open fields or else would have to capitulate for lack of food and ammunition.

That was the prospect a week ago; but another blow which might well have proved final was yet to fall upon us.

Treachery of King Leopold

THE King of the Belgians had called upon us to come to his aid. Had not this ruler and his Government severed themselves from the Allies who rescued their country from extinction in the late war, had they not sought refuge in what has proved to be a fatal neutrality, the French and British Armies might well at the very outset have saved not only Belgium but perhaps even Holland. Yet, at the last moment, when Belgium was already invaded, King Leopold called upon us to come to his aid, and, even at the last moment, we came. He and his brave, efficient Army, nearly half a million strong, guarded our eastern flank, and thus kept open our only line of retreat to the sea.

Suddenly, without prior consultation, with the least possible notice, without the advice of his Ministers, and upon his own personal act, he sent a plenipotentiary to the German Command, surrendered his Army, and exposed our whole flank and means of retreat.

The surrender of the Belgian Army compelled the British at the shortest notice to cover a flank to the sea of more than thirty miles in length, otherwise all would have been cut off and all would have shared the fate to which King Leopold had condemned the finest army his country had ever formed.

The enemy attacked on all sides with great strength and fierceness, and their main power, the power of their far more numerous Air Force, was thrown into the battle or else concentrated upon Dunkirk and the beaches. Pressing in upon the narrow exit, both from the east and from the west, the enemy began to fire with cannon upon the beaches by which alone the shipping could approach or depart. They sowed magnetic mines in the channels and seas, they sent repeated waves of hostile aircraft—sometimes more than 100 strong in one formation—to cast their bombs upon the single pier that remained, and upon the sand dunes on which the troops had their eyes for shelter. Their U-boats, one of which was sunk, and their motor launches took their toll of the vast traffic which now began.

For four or five days an intense struggle raged. All the armoured divisions—or what was left of them—together with great masses of German infantry and artillery, hurled themselves in vain upon the ever narrowing, ever contracting appendix within which the British and French Armies fought. Meanwhile the Royal Navy, with the willing help of countless merchant seamen, strained every nerve to embark the British and Allied troops. . . .

'A Miracle of Deliverance'

MR. CHURCHILL said that the vessels engaged were under an almost ceaseless hail of bombs and shells.

It was in conditions such as these that our men carried on with little or no rest for days and nights on end, making trip after trip across the dangerous waters, bringing with them, always, men whom they had rescued. The numbers they have brought back are the measure of their devotion and their courage.

The hospital ships which brought off many thousands of British and French wounded, being so plainly marked, were a special target for Nazi bombs, but the men and women on board them never faltered in their duty. Meanwhile the Royal Air Force, which had already been intervening in the battle so far as its range would allow from home bases, now used part of its main, metropolitan fighter strength and struck at the German bombers and the fighters which in large numbers protected them. This struggle was protracted and fierce. Suddenly the scene has cleared, the crash and thunder has for the moment—but only for the moment—died away.

A miracle of deliverance achieved by valour, by perseverance, by perfect discipline, by dauntless service, by resource, by skill, by unconquerable fidelity, is manifest to us all.

The enemy was hurled back by the retreating British and French troops. He was so roughly handled that he did not harry their departure seriously. The Royal Air Force engaged the main strength of the German Air Force and inflicted upon them losses of at least four to one, and the Navy, using nearly 1,000 ships of all kinds, carried over 335,000 men, French and British, out of the jaws of death to their native land, and to the tasks which lie immediately ahead.

We must be very careful not to assign to this deliverance the attributes of a victory. Wars are not won by evacuations.

But there was a victory inside this deliverance which should be noted. It was gained by the Air Force. Many of our soldiers coming back have not seen the Air Force at work; they saw only the bombers which escaped its protective attack. They underrate its achievements. I have heard much talk of this, that is why I go out of my way to say this.

On Friday, May 31, 1940, Mr. Winston Churchill was present at a meeting of the Supreme War Council, it being his first attendance as Prime Minister. Mr. Churchill is seen above with M. Reynaud after the meeting. On his left is General Sir John Dill, the new Chief of the Imperial General Staff; on the right of M. Reynaud is Mr. C. R. Attlee, Lord Privy Seal.

'WE SHALL RIDE OUT THE STORMS OF WAR'

This aerial panorama of Dunkirk shows an immense column of black smoke rising from the oil depot after two of the tanks had been fired. In the foreground can be seen the wide beach and shallow sea from which tens of thousands of men of the B.E.F. had to embark. The aeroplane on the right is a Lockheed Hudson twin-engine bomber of the Coastal Command. Other photographs appear in pages 634-35.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

This was a great trial of strength between the British and German Air Forces. Can you conceive a greater objective for the Germans in the air than to make evacuation from these beaches impossible and to sink all these ships which were displayed, almost to the extent of a thousand? Could there have been an objective of greater military importance and significance for the whole purpose of the war than this? They tried hard, and they were beaten back, they were frustrated in their task.

We got the Army away, and the enemy have paid fourfold for any losses which they have inflicted. All of our types—the Hurricane, the Spitfire and the new Defiant—and all our pilots have been vindicated as superior to what they have at present to face.

When we consider how much greater would be our advantage in defending the air above this island against an oversea attack, I must say that I find in these facts a sure basis upon which practical and reassuring thoughts may rest. I will pay my tribute to these young men.

The great French Army was very largely, for the time being, cast back and disturbed by the onrush of a few thousands of armoured vehicles.

MAY it not be also that the cause of civilization itself will be defended by the skill and devotion of a few thousand airmen?

There never has been, I suppose, in all the world, in all the history of war, such an opportunity for youth. The Knights of the Round Table, the Crusaders, all fall back into a prosaic past—not only distant but prosaic. These young men going forth every morn to guard their native land and all that we stand for, holding in their hands these instruments of colossal and shattering power, of whom it may be said that

Every morning brought a noble chance
And every chance brought out a noble knight,

deserve our gratitude, as do all of the brave men who in so many ways and on so many occasions are ready, and continue to be ready, to give life and all for their native land.

I return to the Army. In the long series of very fierce battles, now on this front, now on that, fighting on three fronts at once, battles fought by two or three divisions against an equal or somewhat larger number of the enemy, and fought fiercely on some of the old ground that so many of us knew so well, in these battles our losses in men have exceeded 30,000 killed, wounded, and missing.

Against this loss of over 30,000 men we can set a far heavier loss certainly inflicted upon the enemy. But our losses in material are enormous. We have perhaps lost one-third of the men we lost in the opening days of the battle of March 21, 1918, but we have lost nearly as many guns—nearly 1,000 guns—and all our transport, all the armoured vehicles that were with the Army in the north. . . . The best of all we had to give had gone to the British Expeditionary Force, and although they had not the numbers of tanks and some articles of equipment which were desirable, they were a very well and finely equipped army. They had the first-fruits of all our industry had to give, and that is gone.

THE Prime Minister then spoke of the tremendous effort being made to overtake the loss, and continued:

Nevertheless, our thankfulness at the escape of our Army, and so many men whose loved ones have passed through an agonizing week, must not blind us to the fact that what has happened in France and Belgium is a colossal military disaster.

The French Army has been weakened, the Belgian Army has been lost, a large part of those fortified lines upon which so much faith had been reposed is gone, many valuable mining districts and factories have passed into the enemy's possession, the whole of the Channel ports are in his hands, with all the tragic consequences that follow from that, and we must expect another blow to be struck almost immediately at us or at France.

We are told that Herr Hitler has a plan for invading the British Isles. . . . The whole question of home defence against invasion is, of course, powerfully affected by the fact that we have for the time being in this island incomparably more powerful military forces than we have ever had at any moment in this war or the last, but this will not continue.

We shall not be content with a defensive war, and our duty to our Allies to reconstitute and build up the British Expeditionary Force once again under its gallant Commander-in-Chief, Lord Gort—all this is in train. But in the interval we must put our defences in this island into such a high state of organization that the fewest possible numbers will be required to give effective security and that the largest potential of offensive effort may be realized.

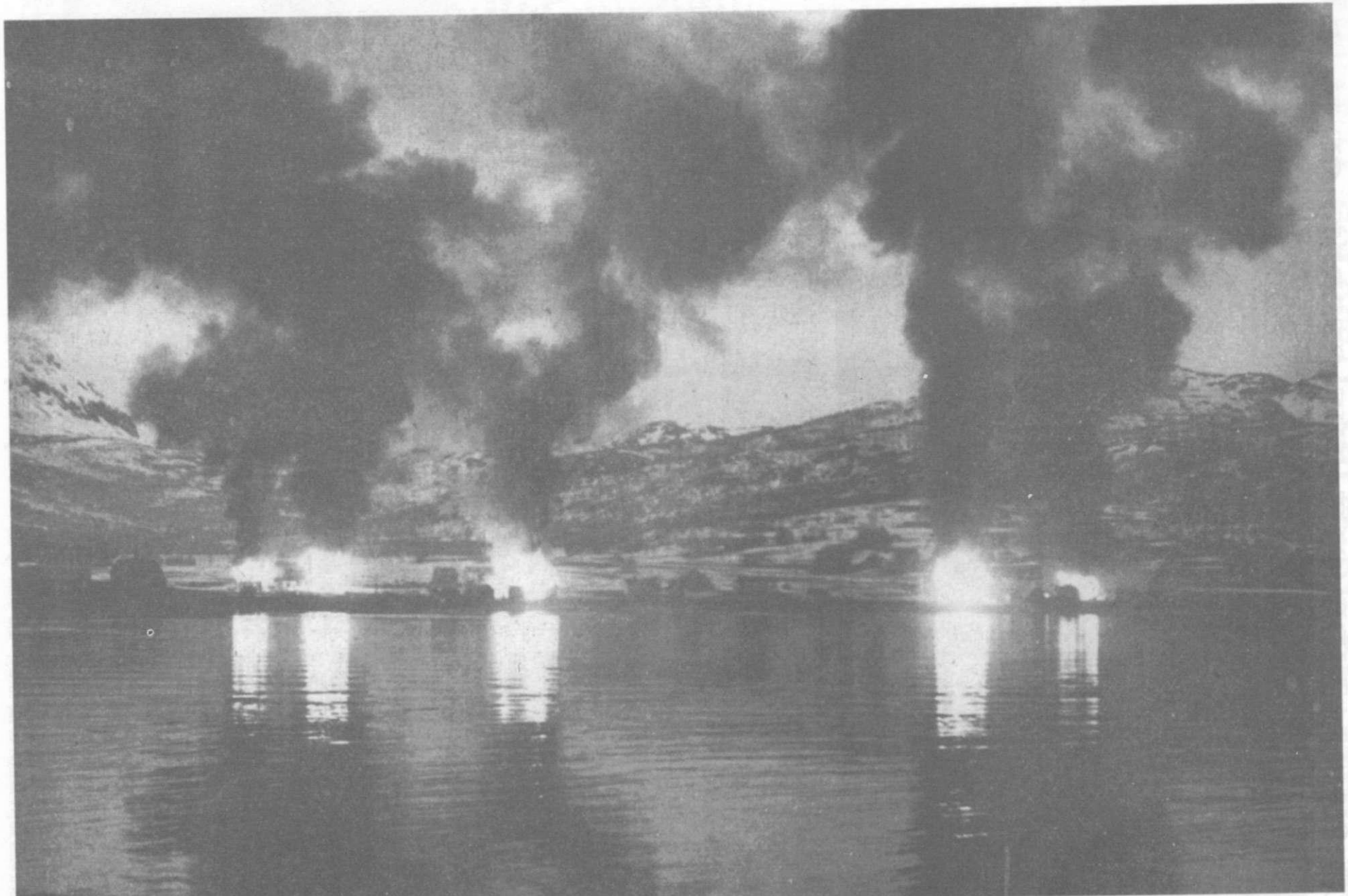
Turning once again, and this time more generally, to the question of invasion, I would observe that there has never been a period in all these long centuries of which we boast when an absolute guarantee against an invasion, still less against serious raids, could have been given to our people. . . .

We must never forget the solid assurances of sea power, and those which belong to air power if it can be locally exercised. I have myself full confidence that if all do their duty, and if nothing is neglected, and if the best arrangements are made, as they are being made, we shall prove ourselves once again able to defend our island home and ride out the storm of war and outlive the menace of tyranny, if necessary for years, if necessary alone. . . . The British Empire and the French Republic, linked together in their cause and in their need, will defend to the death their native soil, aiding each other like good comrades to the utmost of their strength.

Even though large tracts of Europe and many old and famous States have fallen, or may fall, into the grip of the Gestapo and all the odious apparatus of Nazi rule, we shall not flag or fail.

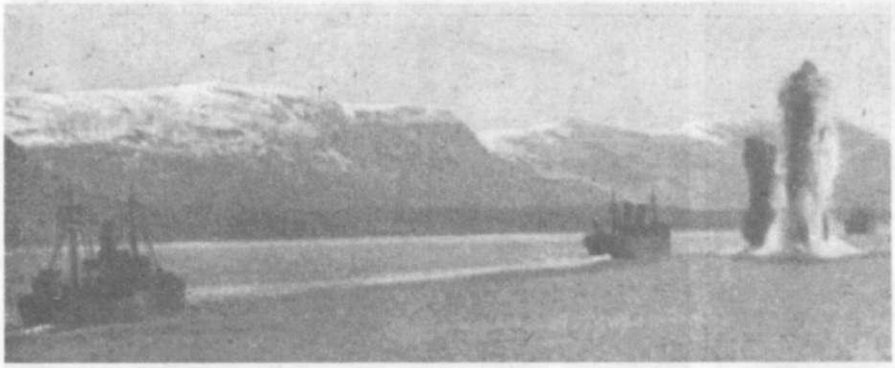
WE shall go on to the end, we shall fight in France, we shall fight on the seas and oceans, we shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air. We shall defend our island whatever the cost may be, we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills.

We shall never surrender, and even if, which I do not for a moment believe, this island, or a large part of it, were subjugated and starving, then our Empire beyond the seas, armed and guarded by the British Fleet, would carry on the struggle, until, in God's good time, the New World, with all its power and might, steps forth to the rescue and the liberation of the Old.



NARVIK OUTPOST LIT BY FIRE AND MIDNIGHT SUN. This photograph shows with dramatic effect a scene just before the fall of Narvik on May 28, 1940. It was taken from an Allied ship off the town of Bjerkvik, which stands at the head of Ofot Fjord, the most northerly point at which Allied troops landed in the encircling movement that brought the German occupation of Narvik to an end. Before the storming-party landed, the German defensive positions were shelled, here and at other points, by British warships; columns of smoke and flame arising from burning buildings show how effectively the work was done. The photograph was taken by the light of the midnight sun. *Photo Central Press*

Narvik Falls at Last Before the Allied Attack



This photograph arrived in London on the day that the official announcement was made that Narvik had been taken. Small transports during the last phase go on steadily up the Vest Fjord though bombs rain around.

Among the Allied troops at Narvik were French Chasseurs Alpins, trained for fighting in mountainous country. Here is one of their machine-gun posts overlooking the Ofot Fjord.

ON April 10, 1940, a British destroyer flotilla under Captain Warburton Lee made its heroic dash into the Vest Fjord, and three days later Vice-Admiral Whitworth's squadron completed the destruction of the German naval units of Narvik. On May 28 British, French, Polish and Norwegian troops, supported by warships, drove the Nazis out of the town. The final assault lasted 25 hours, the brunt of the fighting being borne by the Norwegian Army. After the landing, the troops deployed in the hills while the warships kept up a constant bombardment of German positions. Eventually the enemy, unable to hold out any longer, retreated towards the Swedish frontier and the Allied Army entered the town. Only the waterfront had been badly damaged, but on Sunday, June 2 large parts were destroyed by Nazi incendiary and other bombs.

These German gunners at Narvik had against them not only the Allied field artillery but the heavier guns of the warships in the harbour. Right, are some of the hospital cases brought home from Narvik. Among them are French soldiers. Not all are wounded; many of them are suffering from frost-bite.

Photos, Fox, Service Cinématographique de la Marine and E.N.A.

In a Few Minutes a Thousand Bombs Fell on Paris

These are some of the first photographs of the air raid on Paris of June 3, 1940. One bomb made this large crater in the road and overturned a car. Another did more serious damage (right), when it demolished a block of flats.

AT 1.15 p.m. on June 3, 1940, the alarm was sounded in Paris. Soon heavy anti-aircraft gun-fire was heard as wave after wave of enemy 'planes came over at about 32,000 feet. For twenty minutes the gun-fire continued, and then machine-guns were heard as fighter 'planes engaged the enemy. The raiders dropped whistling bombs in an attempt to create a panic. But before the "all-clear" was sounded, just over an hour later, 254 people had been killed and 652 injured. At Nanterre, a suburb of the city, a direct hit on a girls' school killed eleven little girls and injured eighteen others. Seven other schools and one hospital were hit by incendiary bombs. More than 1,000 bombs were dropped, mainly on the suburbs, though it was claimed that they were aimed at military objectives, in particular aerodromes and war factories. The majority of the victims of this first air raid on the French capital suffered as the result of not going down to shelters or taking other cover. Twenty-five of the raiding 'planes were brought down.

Fires were started in many parts of Paris when the Nazi bombs made direct hits on private houses. Personnel of the fire brigade dealt with this outbreak (left), and prevented further damage. M. Paul Reynaud, the Premier, examines a bomb crater (above).

Photos, Associated Press and Wide World

Eye Witness Stories of Episodes and Adventures in the Second Great War

We Were in the Great Retreat to Dunkirk

The retirement of the Allied armies cut off in Belgium and Northern France was an epic of endurance and discipline. Some first-hand stories of the fighting are here told by members of the B.E.F., who paid tribute to the indispensable help rendered by the Royal Air Force and the Royal Navy in their final rescue from Dunkirk.

GUNNER REGINALD GARNER, of Lincoln, gave a full story of the B.E.F.'s advance into Belgium and subsequent retirement.

"We moved up into Belgium almost immediately after the German invasion," he said, "but after preparing for action at Brussels we received a sudden order to retire. It came as a surprise to us, but we went into action some hours later.

"As we had no reply to the slamming our guns gave them in this action another order to retreat was unexpected, but it was due to the trouble at the bridges over the Meuse, and the fact that the Germans were outflanking us.

"The German prisoners we took at this stage had had no food for three days and showed an amazing lack of confidence in themselves.

"All the time we were retreating we were constantly harassed by bombers dropping their loads of bombs and machine-gunning us, but we heard no fire from the enemy's heavy guns.

"When we reached Dunkirk we were lying for 12 hours on the sands trying to avoid attacks by German aircraft. Incendiary bombs had been dropped on the town, which was blazing fiercely, providing the German airmen with plenty of light even when night came.

"We destroyed our guns and, with really brilliant work by the Navy, managed to embark after great difficulty. Half wading, half swimming, we made a destroyer, and arrived safely in England, but without our equipment.

"The Navy took unheard-of risks to get us away safely from Dunkirk, which was absolutely in ruins. I saw their A.A. guns shoot down one German bomber.

"The R.A.F., although apparently outnumbered by the Germans, were unquestionably superior and we saw many fights which proved this."

Another gunner, back after 17 days "in hell," said:

"Our boys fought like heroes.

"During the whole of the time I was out there I never met a single man who lost his temper or uttered a grouse.

"I saw men working until they were too tired to lift a shell. Even then they sat on the ground and managed, somehow or other, to push the shells up to the guns."

Valuable help with the wounded home from Dunkirk was given by men of the A.R.P. service trained in first aid. Here one of them is supporting a wounded French soldier. *Photo, L.N.A.*

A regular sergeant spoke with enthusiasm of British militiamen. "They were wonderful," he said, "and never got panicky."

Another soldier described how the British artillery put up a barrage a mile long. "The Germans just advanced right into it," he said. "Their casualties must have been tremendous. More and more men were thrown into the fight and they came on relentlessly."

Members of a Guards' unit paid a tribute to German shock troops.

"They came over absolutely regardless of our bullets, all of them great big fellows," said one of the Guardsmen. "They were armed with Tommy guns and sometimes would stand a few yards in front of us, spraying us with bullets—but not for long.

"The shock troops were good. The infantry who came after them were different altogether. Some of them were mere children. Among those we captured were some only 17 years old.

"The shock troops came over with nothing but a Tommy gun and spare ammunition hanging on their belt—no

These men of the B.E.F. coming ashore are typical of the 335,000 Allied soldiers who were safely embarked from Dunkirk by the Navy and the great fleet of auxiliary vessels. Despite the difficulties of evacuation most of the men still carried their rifles, while one of those seen above still retains his trophy, a German cavalry sword. *Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright*

gas nask, no pack, no gas cloak. They also wear armour-plated waistcoats. We examined some and found that this was so.

"But even the German shock troops ran when they saw us advancing with bayonets," stated one Guardsman.

Hundreds of Belgian Soldiers Came with Us

"We were full of beans, giving the Germans hell," said a private. "We heard rumours about Leopold, but said they were Fifth Column stunts.

"Suddenly we found those rumours were facts. Where the Belgians should have been on our flank we found the Germans. So we had to retreat; and we did, fighting all the way back to the sea.

"It made us sick to have to do it, but we retreated, and we found then that hundreds of Belgian soldiers were coming with us. They were stung by what their King had done, but they were not giving in to Hitler, so back they came with us.

"At last we came to the place where we had to find a boat. All the time we were being bombed. If a minute passed without a bomb it was uncanny.

"On the shore we waited for boats, all of us, British, French and Belgians. Behind us we had left burning oil dumps and ruin.

"The ships came, risking everything to reach us. They were marvellously manned, those boats. We took off our boots, wrapped our rifles in our coats and tied them on our heads. Then we swam to the boats.

"There were thousands of us. As we swam we were bombed and machine-gunned. Aboard the ship the men could not lie down; there were so many of us. We stood up back to back, and a lot of us dropped off to sleep where we stood."

'Some of the Boys were Bathing!'

A young gunner from Tidworth said: "I was forty miles from Dunkirk when the order came to save ourselves. I scrounged a lift in a tank.

"For two days we ran in and out of the German columns. Once we came right on them, but we just laid low and they passed us by. Once we struck a small unit and opened fire on them. We cleaned them up and then moved quick.

"We steered by compass. We had no water and precious little food. But we meant to get that tank and ourselves to Dunkirk somehow, and we did it.

"Before we broke up our unit to make for the coast we blew up our guns—the same guns that had demolished in five minutes a village in Belgium where a German battery had been set up.

"On the beach we had to bury ourselves in the sand when the machine-gunning was too hot. But, believe me, there were other times when the boys, bombers or no bombers, were having a bathe."

I WAS THERE!

Our Adventures with the Fishermen's Armada

One of the most amazing sights of the evacuation of Allied troops from Dunkirk was the flotilla of craft of all kinds which, thanks to the calm weather, plied across the Channel time after time. A "Daily Mirror" reporter, Ewart Brookes, was among the crew of a motor-yacht, and here is his dramatic story of rescue under fire.

I was one of the volunteer crew of a motor-yacht which left a South-East Coast port. We were the Harry Tate navy—open motor-boats, slick varnished motor-cruisers, hard-bitten tarred fishing boats, Thames barges and the "shilling trip around the lightship" pleasure boat of the peacetime beach.

It looked like a holiday cruise as we set course. Then we closed up to the Flanders coast. My skipper, a grey-haired London doctor with two sons somewhere in the B.E.F., never lost his quizzical smile.

When the coast-line was only a grey smudge, above us was heard a deep drone. Bellowing German machines flew low over the bigger ships off the coast, ships we were to load from our trailing string of small boats.

How closely packed were the men on the ships that evacuated them from Dunkirk can be seen from the photograph of two such vessels above. In the foreground is one of the small rescue ships: in her shore boat in the stern are the life-belts of the crew, who, with a fine gesture, have discarded them, there not being enough to go round among the passengers.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

"Close in, put your small boats ashore, fill them up and take them off to the large craft." These were the simple orders.

"Look for a black mass on the beach," said my skipper. "That will be soldiers." I found myself whispering to him. I don't know why. Then, in the darkness, I saw a mass on the beach that looked like seaweed.

"Are you British?" I hailed.

"Not 'arf we ain't," came the answer, followed by a broad North Country accent: "What aboot taking us off?"

The dark waters splashed whitely. The soldiers waded out to us, dead beat, heavy-eyed, bomb-stunned, and clambered aboard with help from our crew. On the beach were thousands, many wounded. Hour after hour we helped them aboard, until our arms ached, pulling them over the side, giving them a drink of water, giving them coats, life-belts, anything on which to rest their heads. Frenchmen waded out clinging to a roll of muddied blankets. Britishers discarding all but their rifles and cigarettes. All incredibly dirty, incredibly tired, but still fighting mad.

But with the dawn the Germans tried again to stake their claim of wiping out the B.E.F. Bombs, machine-guns and artillery blazed away in an incessant chorus. Still men lived and were rescued. From the golden sands more British soldiers staggered, with an N.C.O. in charge. "Fifty to a boat," he said. And not a man moved into the water until the N.C.O. said so.

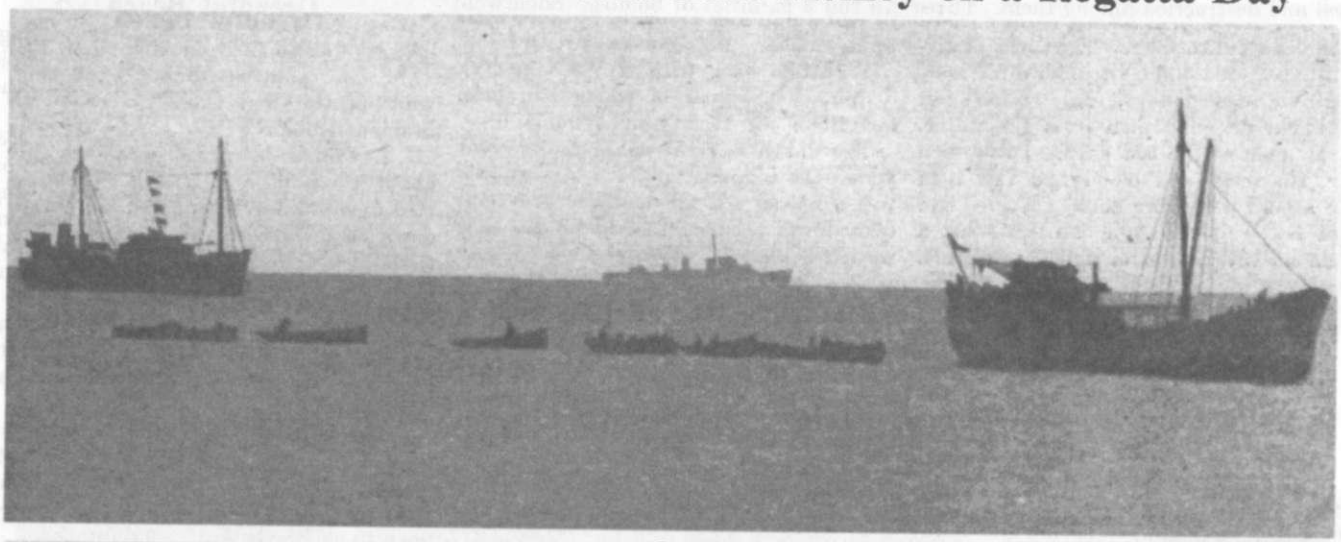
I saw British soldiers, bombed and shelled, with cracked lips, covered in mud, on the sand playing football with a half of French bread, a grotesque, staggering dribble, while bombs marked out the touch-lines of this bizarre ground.

The bombardment went on incessantly—crushing artillery well in shore, bombs to seawards, and on the beach still the khaki procession, seemingly endless, came on. Up to their knees, up to their waists even up to their necks, they waded.

More German bombers roared over-

I WAS THERE!

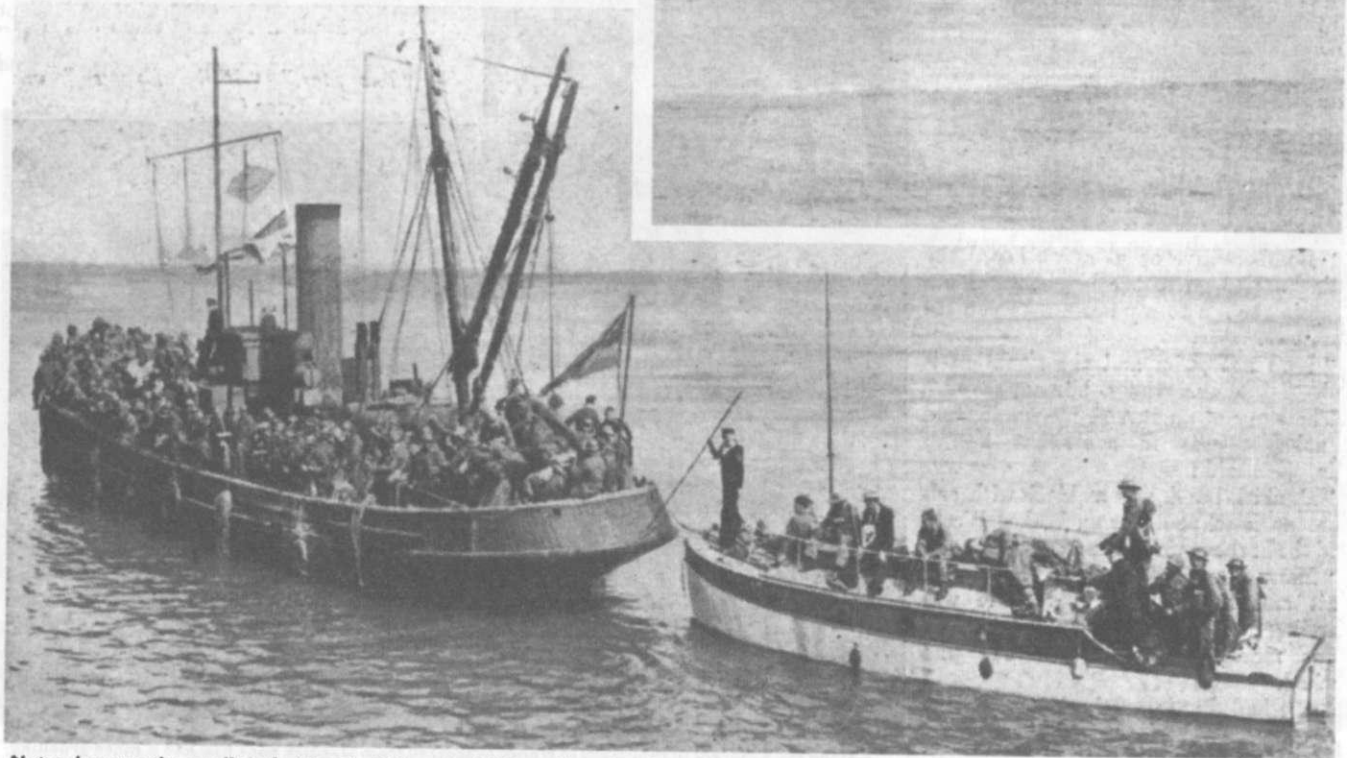
Off Dunkirk the Channel Was Like Henley on a Regatta Day



Cross-Channel steamers are notoriously small and responsive to the swell of the Straits of Dover. But thousands of men crossed from Dunkirk in small open boats and some, as in the photograph above, were even towed across in strings of rowing boats.

This view of an escorting destroyer at full speed (above) was taken from the deck of a trawler by a member of the crew. The trawler was one of many packed with Allied troops from Dunkirk.

Photos, "Daily Mirror," Planet News, Associated Press, "The Times"



Not only were the small craft (above) of the mixed "ferry" service from Dunkirk crowded to capacity, but every inch of available deck space on the escorting French destroyers (top right) was occupied by Allied soldiers. It was largely due to the splendid cooperation between the French Navy, the Royal Navy and the captains of the smaller craft that the evacuation was effected with such smoothness.

I WAS THERE!

head. A warship, 200 yards away, spat hell and destruction among them. Three tumbled from the sky. The flight of aircraft shattered and split in all directions.

Hours seemed days. Life seemed full of khaki dripping men from the water. I saw men at the last gasp. I saw men die, shattered and bloody. I saw men die ashore before we could get to them. But I saw no dejection, no fear—just a grim intensity, so grim it frightened me.

Every ship, every barge loading it, had to run a gauntlet of bombs. Some went up in smoke. Most got away.

We came back with a West-Country drifter, the skipper of which had been out there for twenty-eight hours.

The darkness came again as we went across the Channel, and the last we saw was a line of red fire with the incessant overture of artillery and bomb fire that we left behind us.

We Waited on the Beaches at Dunkirk

Even when they reached Dunkirk after exhausting days of retreat under fire, the men of the Allied forces had to undergo bombardment while they waited to embark for England. The following eye-witness stories tell of the sufferings of the troops and of their spirit, and of the heroism of the Red Cross nurses who tended the wounded on the beach.

A DUNDEE man in the Highland Light Infantry said: "There was a ship on fire in Dunkirk Harbour, and many wrecks when we left. It is terrible there.

"The German heavies have got the range, and it is awful for the boys waiting on the beach.

"We want more 'planes, thousands more. I hardly ever saw one of ours. We were lucky to get away."

A French officer who reached England said: "We were bombed and machine-gunned from the air all the time we were on the sands. We scraped holes for cover, but the Germans flew very low up and down our lines shooting at us.

"We had almost no ammunition, and when we wanted food we had to hunt for it in the wrecked houses near the shore.

"Many soldiers were wounded and killed. It was distressing to us all. All the time we prayed for Allied 'planes, but none came.

"We looked for rescue ships, but saw only many wrecks. We said to each other: 'We are captured, certainly.' This was bad for morale. . . .

"Well, as we think like this, we see a boat. It is the gallant Navy. We cheer, but are soon stilled.

"Bombers dive on us as we board the little boat to go to the big boat. I am flung in the sea to my neck. As you see I am wet.

"I do not swim and the situation is bad. I lose everything, but am saved."

The story of an R.A.F. mechanic from Manchester was in somewhat lighter vein. He said:

"Dunkirk beach was as black with soldiers as Blackpool during Wakes Week. And the harbour was crammed with boats.

"Many of us waded out to the smaller craft and the drifters. My mate was standing neck deep in the water when the Huns machine-gunned him. He just ducked.

"We had dug in on the beach waiting for orders. When the bombers came from one side we moved over to the other.

"I and my mate had a good hide-out. A bomb made a big hole in the sand. My mate said: 'Hop in, a 'plane never hits the same spot twice.' He was right.

"What did we do? Played sand castles—that's gospel—and cards. Not pontoon, though, no money, see.

"And between the raids and the shelling we had football matches. Somebody had got a ball, don't ask me from where.

"Mostly though, we groused about not having enough to eat. I haven't had bread for fourteen days. Well, except for a bit I scrounged from the French.

"But I suppose it wasn't so bad when you got used to the noise."

Nurses Worked on that Dreadful Beach

A WOUNDED man on landing in England paid a tribute to the heroic work of the Red Cross nurses on the beach at Dunkirk.

"I cannot describe what we feel about those girls," he said. "Out on that dreadful beach, with the sun pouring down on them, with German 'planes continually overhead and shells bursting all the time, they have worked without stopping for days past.

"If they have slept, they have done so on their feet. Dressed in their white uniforms, the women stand out among the exhausted and wounded men.

"Attacked by German 'planes and even by tanks, with machine-gun bullets whistling all round, I have seen them crawling into the open and dragging wounded men to shelter beneath sand dunes.

"I saw one party of them dressing wounded who were lying out in the open. A 'plane began bombing. They just lay down by their patients and continued bandaging. They have fetched water and food, helped wounded to reach the rescue boats, even wading in the water to assist the men.

"Angels is the only word you can use to describe them. I have seen some of them killed as they went about their work.

"We have asked them to go back in the rescue ships, but they have refused. Each one has said, 'We shall go when we have finished this job—there's plenty of time, so don't worry about us.'"

"The doctors, too, have been magnificent. They are working stripped to the waist to tend the injured. None of them has slept for days. They also refuse to leave."

—("*The Star*," "*Daily Express*," and "*News Chronicle*.")

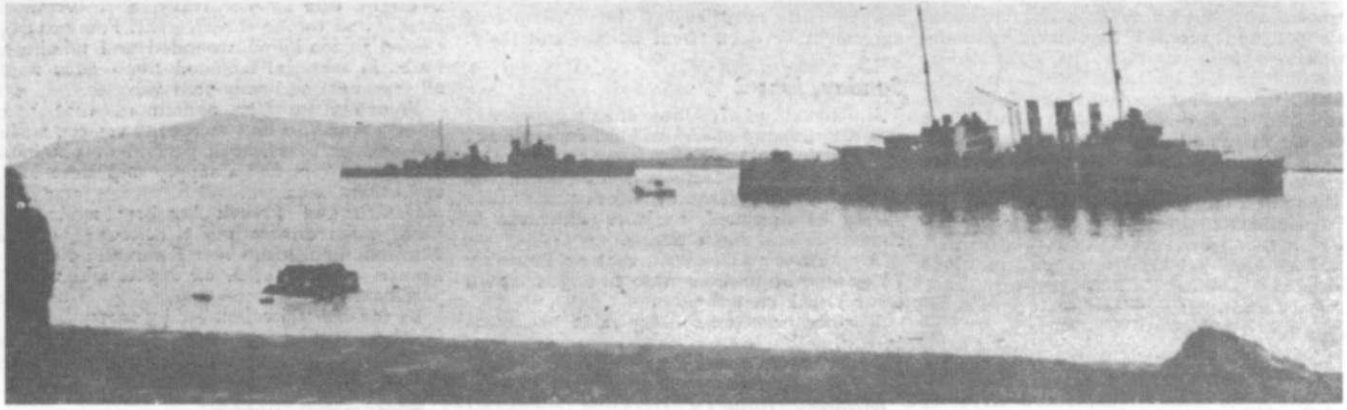
Among the hundreds of thousands of troops evacuated from Dunkirk none had had a more gruelling time than those of General Prioux's Army, one of whom is seen, top left, in England. Above is one of the nurses who was wounded when the former cross-Channel steamer "Paris," now a hospital ship, was attacked by Nazi bombers on June 2. *Photos Fox and Planet News*

Iceland Taken Under the Shield of Britain

The invasion of Denmark on April 9, 1940 by Nazi troops isolated Iceland from her sister country. British troops were sent to the island on May 10, as the inhabitants could not have resisted a Nazi invasion. Reykjavik, the capital of Iceland, is seen above.

Until British forces arrived in Iceland (above) the island was totally undefended, although in certain respects it is of some strategic importance.

The first duty allotted to the British force in Iceland was to arrest the German Consul General, Dr. Gerlach, a well-known Nazi. He is here seen (circle above) entering his car under arrest, prior to being placed on board a British warship. The next task performed by our soldiers was to occupy the broadcasting station (left).



After the landing of the British troops in Iceland a cruiser of the Cumberland class, accompanied by a destroyer escort, remained on guard in Reykjavik Harbour. Iceland has declared herself independent and neutral, and has no army or navy at all. Formerly Denmark fostered Iceland's interests throughout the world, but now Iceland's parliament, the Althing, has decided to take charge of her own foreign affairs.

Photos, "The Times," Associated Press and Sport & General

HISTORIC WORDS

Extracted from Authoritative War Speeches and Statements

(*Continued from page* 619)

Wednesday, May 29, 1940

H.M. THE KING in a message to Lord Gort, Commander-in-Chief, B.E.F.:

All your countrymen have been following with pride and admiration the courageous resistance of the British Expeditionary Force during the continuous fighting of the last fortnight.

Placed by circumstances outside their control in a position of extreme difficulty, they are displaying a gallantry that has never been surpassed in the annals of the British Army.

The hearts of every one of us at home are with you and your magnificent troops in this hour of peril.

Thursday, May 30

M. LEBRUN, President of the French Republic, in a message to General Blanchard, Commander-in-Chief of Allied troops in the North:

While the French troops under your orders, in full collaboration with the B.E.F. and with the help of the Allied Navies, are fighting a battle which will be placed in the foremost pages of military history, I send them the grateful greetings of the country.

All Frenchmen unite in expressing to you their warm admiration for the great courage and fierce energy of our soldiers and the new glory with which they are adorning our flag.

Sunday, June 2

MR. ANTHONY EDEN, Secretary of State for War, in a broadcast talk:

Four days ago not one of us would have dared to hope that the isolated Allied Armies could have fought their way through the bottleneck to the coast. It is the spirit of the B.E.F. that has won through. These men have marched hundreds of miles. They have fought countless actions with an enemy that hemmed them in and pressed upon them from three sides. The German High Command proudly announced that they were surrounded. They have fought their way out. How have they achieved the seemingly impossible?

Man for man, the British troops have proved themselves superior to the Germans wherever they have met them. All accounts show that the British Expeditionary Force attacked and took a toll of the enemy greatly in excess of that suffered by themselves. . . .

The stories of individual exploits at this time are legion . . . But the triumph is not the triumph of individuals, however gallant. It is the triumph of an army. There is no braver epic in our annals. . . .

From the moment of the collapse of the Belgian Army there was only one course left to the Allied Armies—to hold a line round Dunkirk, the only port that remained, and to embark as many men as possible before their rearguards were overwhelmed. Thanks to the magnificent and untiring cooperation of the Allied Navies and Air Forces, we have been able to embark and save more than four-fifths of that B.E.F. which the Germans claimed were surrounded . . . The British Expeditionary Force still exists, not as a handful of fugitives, but as a body of seasoned veterans.

We have had great losses in equipment, but our men have gained immeasurably in experience of warfare and in self-confidence. The vital weapon of any army is its spirit. Ours has been tried and tempered in the furnace. It has not been found wanting. It is this refusal to accept defeat that is the guarantee of final victory.

Our duty in this country is plain. We must make good our losses, and we must win this war. To do that we must profit by the lessons of this battle. Brave hearts alone cannot stand up against steel. We need more 'planes, more tanks, more guns. We must show the same qualities, the same discipline, and the same self-sacrifice at home as the B.E.F. have shown in the field.

The nation honours with proud reverence those who fell that their comrades might win through. Their spirit must be our banner; their sacrifice our spur.

OUR DIARY OF THE WAR

Wednesday, May 29, 1940

French and British armies in Northern France **fighting fierce rearguard action** while manoeuvring towards the coast. Desperate struggle on banks of Yser.

Strong Allied naval forces, powerfully supported in the air, defending port of **Dunkirk.**

Germans claimed capture of Ostend, Lille, Ypres and other towns in Belgium.

Stated that in the south **another British Army** has **joined French forces on Somme** defensive line.

British and French Air Forces continued to launch mass attacks on enemy columns and concentrations.

Thursday, May 30

Fighting retreat of B.E.F. and French forces **towards the coast** continued. Wounded and troops not immediately engaged were evacuated from **Dunkirk** with assistance of Allied Navies.

Both withdrawal and evacuation screened by R.A.F., whose fighters and bombers were ceaselessly engaged against the enemy.

Dunkirk defences reinforced by flooding south-west and north-east.

Paris reported that vanguard of First French Army, cut off near Cassel, fought its way out and reached Dunkirk. Germans claimed to have captured its commander, General Prioux.

War Office announced that small British force sent last week to hold **Calais** had rendered invaluable assistance to main body of B.E.F. withdrawing towards Dunkirk by **heroic refusal to surrender** in face of violent and continuous attack.

Admiralty announced that H.M. destroyers "Grafton," "Grenade" and "Wakeful" had been sunk off France, as well as small transport "Abukir" and certain small auxiliary craft.

Friday, May 31

Evacuation of British and French troops **proceeded successfully** owing to remarkable coordinated action of all three Services of the Allies.

Relays of R.A.F. bombers continued pressure on enemy lines of communication, and formations of fighters maintained offensive patrols over Dunkirk area. Other heavy bombers carried out attacks against military objectives in north-west Germany.

French recaptured western **part of Abbeville.** At another point near Somme estuary they gained a foothold on north bank of river.

Admiralty announced that British warship "Curlew" had been sunk by bombing off coast of Norway.

Saturday, June 1

Reported that **embarkation from Dunkirk** had been **speeded up**, craft of every size, naval and mercantile, being engaged in ceaseless ferry service to Britain.

Lord Gort returned to London from Flanders, and was invested with the G.C.B.

R.A.F. continued operations in support of rearguard action of Allied Armies and embarkation from Dunkirk. Other formations carried out further raids on Dutch harbours occupied by Nazis.

German 'planes bombed **Marseilles, Lyons** and other industrial **towns in Rhône Valley.** Forty-six people killed and over 100 injured.

Announced that Italian Government had broken off negotiations for contraband agreement between Great Britain and Italy.

Sunday, June 2

Embarkation of Allied troops proceeded steadily, in spite of intensified bombardment of the mole at Dunkirk by German artillery.

Mr. Eden, War Secretary, announced that more than **four-fifths of B.E.F.** had arrived **safely in England,** together with tens of thousands of French troops.

Air Ministry announced that on Saturday **78 enemy machines** were **brought down over Dunkirk beaches.**

Further enemy bombing raids on towns in **Rhône Valley.**

Nearly 50,000 children evacuated from south-eastern and eastern areas of England.

Monday, June 3

Withdrawal from Dunkirk and neighbouring beaches continued, though pace had diminished.

Enemy continued to attack with ferocity. Artillery bombardment of beaches increased.

Admiralty communiqué on Navy's part in withdrawal stated that 222 British naval vessels and 665 other British craft and boats took part.

Three more destroyers reported lost off France: "Basilisk," "Keith," and "Havant." Of more than 170 minor war vessels engaged in withdrawal, 24 were lost.

Zeebrugge reported **blocked** and other ports in enemy hands rendered useless.

R.A.F. bombers made series of attacks on enemy communications and gun emplacements; other formations attacked aerodromes and other objectives in north-west Germany.

Over 1,000 bombs dropped in first enemy raid **on Paris and outskirts.** Casualties totalled 906, including 254 killed. **Twenty-five** raiders shot down and 75 crew killed or taken prisoner.

Tuesday, June 4

Evacuation from Dunkirk **completed** at 7 a.m.

Mr. Churchill stated in the House that 335,000 **British and French troops** were **brought out** by the Navy, a deliverance largely due to the R.A.F. B.E.F. losses exceeded 30,000 killed, wounded and missing; losses in material included 1,000 guns and all transport and armoured vehicles.

French Admiralty announced that 300 French warships and merchant vessels, with 200 smaller boats, took part in evacuation. Five destroyers and a supply ship were lost and others damaged.

R.A.F. and French bombers made reprisal raids during night of June 3-4 on **Munich, Frankfurt** and **Ruhr** and **Rhineland** munition works, oil depots and transport centres.

Le Havre region bombed by enemy 'planes for three hours.

Sir Edmund Ironside, G.O.C.-in-C. Home Forces, organizing bodies of strongly armed troops for home defence.

Wednesday, June 5

At 4 a.m. **Germans launched new offensive** along Somme and Aisne with massed infantry, tanks and aircraft.